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GREGORY THE GREAT

HIS PLACE IN HISTORY AND THOUGHT

BY

F. HOMES DUDDEN, B.D.

FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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BOOK II

GREGORY'S PONTIFICATE

CONTINUED

CHAPTER VI

GREGORY AND THE LOMBARDS

King Authari, it will be remembered, died on the 5th of September in the year 590. He left no children behind him, nor was there any member of the royal house sufficiently eminent to be marked out for the succession. The Lombards, however, were determined that there should not be another interregnum, and, by a very simple expedient, they made provision for the continuance of the monarchy. "Then all the Lombards," says Paul,[1] "since Queen Theudelinda pleased them well, decided that she should remain queen, and that whosoever of the Lombards should be chosen by her as husband should wear the royal crown."

Now, among the guests who had attended Theudelinda's wedding at Verona in 589 was a certain Agilulf duke of Turin. During the festivities a thunderstorm had occurred, and a tree in the palace garden had been struck by lightning. On this one of his servants, who was a magician, had told Agilulf, secretly, "The woman who has just been married to our king will soon be married to you." The duke, alarmed lest Authari should hear of this indiscreet disclosure, threatened to cut off the servant's head if he said any more of the matter; but the magician replied, "You may kill me, but the foreign woman will assuredly become your wife."[2] Eighteen months later the prophecy was fulfilled. Theudelinda, casting about for a new husband, called to mind the handsome, soldier-like man she had once seen at Verona, and sent him word to come to her. In her impatience she even went out to meet him as far as the village of Lomello, some twenty miles from Pavia. When the

[1] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iii. 35.

[2] *Ibid.* iii. 30.

duke arrived, and the first greetings had been exchanged, the queen called for a goblet of wine, and, after tasting it herself, ordered it to be carried to Agilulf, who, still uncertain of her meaning, received the cup and knelt to kiss her hand. Then Theudelinda, blushing and smiling, said, "He ought not to kiss the hand who should rather kiss the lips"; and with these words she raised him up and kissed him, telling him that she had chosen him to be her husband and to share her throne. So the marriage was celebrated with great rejoicing, and in the November of this year Agilulf began to reign. His formal installation as king, however, did not take place until six months later, at Milan.[1]

This pretty story must not, perhaps, be taken as literal history. Paul loved to collect the legends of his people, and the accuracy of his narratives cannot always be depended upon. A sentence in the chronicle entitled *Origo Gentis Langobardorum*, seems to imply that the initiative was taken by Agilulf: "And Acquo, the Thuringian duke, went forth from Turin, and joined himself to Queen Theudelinda, and was made King of the Lombards."[2] This duke may possibly have been an ambitious man, who married the queen in order the more easily to gain the crown; while Theudelinda, on her side, may have thought it expedient to associate with herself, both in matrimony and royalty, the principal claimant to the sovereignty of the Lombards. The manner in which the union was brought about is not, however, of great importance. The marriage itself was a happy one, and turned out greatly to the benefit of the Lombard people.

The new king is a somewhat shadowy figure in history. Of his personal character we know hardly anything, and we are left to make conjecture about his qualities from the bare narrative of his exploits. He seems to have been a strenuous man, with iron will and clear intelligence, a spirited soldier, and a fairly able ruler. Though not by any means a hero of romance, he was endowed with plenty of sound sense and solid worth. He knew how to keep in order his unruly Lombards, and how to

[1] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iii. 35. Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* x. 3 asserts that Authari was succeeded by Paulus (who is nowhere else mentioned), and Baronius (ann. 590) suggests that Agilulf took the name Paulus on becoming a Catholic. But Agilulf was an Arian many years after Gregory of Tours was dead.

[2] *Origo*, c. 6. Cf. the Continuator of Prosper. *M.G.H. SS. antiq.* ix. p. 339.

prosecute a fair, if somewhat cruel, war against his Roman foes. The personality of his wife, however, is far more interesting. Indeed, of all the royal ladies whom the sixth century produced, this queen is the one who most attracts our sympathy and our admiration. And yet this period was prolific in examples of remarkable women. There was Queen Chlotilda—though her work belongs strictly to the last decade of the fifth century—who persuaded Clovis and his Franks to embrace Catholic Christianity. There was Bertha of Kent, who helped forward the conversion of Britain. There was Brunichildis, a woman of astonishing power and no less astonishing wickedness; and Theodora, the immoral pantomimist, who won the heart of Justinian and gained an Empire; and Fredegundis, brilliantly clever and atrociously vile. But among all these there was no woman of greater ability than Theudelinda, and none with a tithe of the amiable qualities which made this Lombard queen beloved, not only by her own people, but even by her natural enemies the Romans. Theudelinda is, in fact, the heroine of the sixth century. The daughter of the Bavarian Garibald, she was connected, through her mother Walderada, with the old Lombard kings, and herself influenced in a remarkable manner the destinies of the nation. Her beautiful face and graceful figure enchanted Authari; her goodness, wisdom, and gracious bearing captured and retained the affections of the people whom she ruled. By her—if Paul's story is true—the state was saved, on the death of Authari, from relapsing into anarchy. Through her influence the bitter feelings that subsisted between Lombards and Romans were soothed and mitigated. By her means the Arian Lombards were led eventually to embrace the Catholic faith. The wife of two kings and the mother of a third, Theudelinda presided over her people as their good genius for more than a quarter of a century, and long after that her name was held in deepest reverence.[1] Her memory even now is green in the little town of Monza. Here she built a palace, adorned with paintings of heroic deeds, wherein the old Lombards were represented in their ancient dress, and

[1] It is scarcely necessary to remark that the scandalous story invented by Boccaccio about Theudelinda (*Decameron* iii. *n.* 2) has not the least historical foundation.

with long love-locks hanging down about their faces.[1] Here, too, she built the Church of St. John the Baptist, enriching it with many precious ornaments of gold and silver.[2] And in the treasury of this basilica there may yet be seen, amid other objects of interest, an antique comb, a crown, and some golden chickens, which are said to have once belonged to Theudelinda.

When Agilulf became king, his first care was to put himself on terms of friendship with his neighbours beyond the Alps. One embassy to the Franks had already been sent by Authari, and a second, immediately after the death of that king, by the Lombard chiefs.[3] Now for the third time ambassadors were sent to the Austrasian court. Euin duke of Trent went as Agilulf's representative, and Agnellus bishop of Trent was entrusted with the special mission of treating for the restoration of the prisoners that had been carried off by the invading host of Chedin. Agnellus, it seems, was only partially successful, but Euin had no difficulty in arranging an agreement.[4] King Childebert, weary of prosecuting a war which he had undertaken chiefly at the solicitation of the Emperor, was very glad to conclude a peace, which, with slight interruptions, was destined to last for a century and a half—until, indeed, the exigencies of the Popes caused them to summon a new dynasty of Frankish kings to deliver them from the yoke of the "unspeakable Lombards."

Having thus secured himself against external foes, Agilulf next turned his attention to the reduction to obedience of his own rebellious subjects. The most important of these were Mimulf, who gallantly defended himself in the island of S. Giulio in the Lake of Orta, Gaidulf duke of Bergamo, and Ulfari duke of Treviso.[5] All three were subdued, not without difficulty, and at last the Lombard king was free to turn his arms against the Empire.

So long as Agilulf was engaged upon his own affairs in the north, the Romans had no immediate danger to apprehend from that quarter. Nevertheless, the Roman territory, on its eastern and southern frontiers, was exposed to the perpetual peril of invasion by the Lombards of the two great southern duchies.

[1] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 22.
[2] *Ibid.* iv. 21.
[3] *Ibid.* iii. 34, 35.
[4] *Ibid.* iv. 1.
[5] *Ibid.* iv. 3.

The north-eastern frontier was threatened by the Duke of Spoleto, who further endeavoured to cut off communications between Rome and Ravenna along the Via Flaminia, which passed through Spoleto. The southern frontier was harassed by the Duke of Benevento, who, on his part, intercepted communications between Rome and Brindisi along the Via Appia. The predatory incursions of these two chiefs and their savage attacks on the outlying towns and villages, kept the inhabitants of the Roman Ducatus in a state of constant alarm, and the difficulty of communication with the Imperial authorities naturally added to their embarrassment and distress.

In the year 591 Zotto and Farwald, dukes of Benevento and Spoleto, both died. Zotto was succeeded by Arichis, a native of Friuli, and a kinsman of Duke Gisulf.[1] In Spoleto one Ariulf was made duke—an energetic man, about whom there is a curious story, which, though it refers to a later time, may for convenience be related here.[2] After a battle at Camerino, in which the Imperialists had been routed, Duke Ariulf inquired of his soldiers who the warrior was whom he had seen fighting among them with such conspicuous bravery. They said, "There was none braver than yourself." "Nay," replied Ariulf, "there was a better man than I, who protected me with his shield whenever the enemy wished to strike me." Soon afterwards they came, in their march, to a stately basilica, which, on inquiry, Ariulf learned was named after St. Sabinus, "whose help the Christians are wont to invoke when they go forth to war." The duke, who was a heathen, marvelled how any one could believe that a dead man could help the living, but on the impulse of curiosity he dismounted and went to inspect the church. As he wandered round the aisles, looking at the mosaics which decorated the walls, he came suddenly on a

[1] Paul. Diac. iv. 18. For a letter written by Gregory to Arichis, see *Epp.* ix. 126. This letter commences: "Quia sic de gloria vestra, *sicut re vera de filio nostro*, confidimus, petere a vobis aliqua fiducialiter provocamur. . . ." This address has led some to conjecture that by 599 (the date of the letter) Arichis had become a Catholic. But such an hypothesis seems unwarranted. The phraseology probably signifies nothing more than that Arichis was at this time on friendly terms with the Pope. The object of the letter was to ask the duke to give assistance for the transmission to Rome of timber from Bruttii, destined for the repair of the basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul.

[2] Paul. Diac. iv. 16.

portrait of St. Sabinus himself. The duke stared at it with amazement, and then exclaimed with an oath, "Why, that is the face, and that is the figure of the man who protected me in the fight."

With these three kings, then (for the great dukes had all the attributes of kingship save the title)—Agilulf at Pavia, Ariulf at Spoleto, and Arichis at Benevento—the newly created Pope Gregory was called upon to deal.

At the very commencement of his pontificate the Pope was made sensible of the extreme difficulty of his position. "Outside the walls," he wrote to a friend in Sicily,[1] "we are without ceasing smitten by the swords of the enemy. Inside we are threatened with a still graver danger—a sedition of the soldiers." The latter peril seems for a time to have been averted, probably by a distribution from the treasury of the Church; but the ravages of war continued. The town of Minturnae, on the extreme southern border of the Roman territory, was reduced to desolation by the Lombards of Benevento,[2] and nearer Rome the Lombards of Spoleto became increasingly bold in their aggressions. "For my sins,"[3] wrote the Pope, "I find myself bishop, not of the Romans, but of the Lombards, whose promises stab like swords, and whose kindness is bitter punishment." Meanwhile the Exarch Romanus was at Ravenna, doing nothing but sulk over the miscarriage of his plans in connection with the Frank invasion. Occasional communications passed between him and Gregory, but the latter seems neither to have asked nor to have received any military aid. Probably he had already gauged the character of the Imperial Governor, and knew that any operations against the enemy in the Roman district must be conducted independently of assistance from Ravenna.

The year 591 was marked by a long drought, which lasted from January till September, and was followed by a famine.[4] During this time the Lombards contented themselves with

[1] *Epp.* i. 3. [2] *Ibid.* i. 8. [3] *Ibid.* i. 30.

[4] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 2. Paul adds: "Venit quoque et magna locustarum magnitudo in territorium Tridentinum, quae maiores erant quam caeterae locustae; et mirum dictum, herbas paludesque depastae sunt, segetes vero agrorum exigue contigerunt. Sequenti quoque anno pari nihilominus modo adventarunt."

somewhat desultory warfare. We read of monks in Bruttii being driven from their convents,[1] and of numbers of people in Campania fleeing, "through stress of barbarian ferocity," to the little islands off the coast.[2] Meanwhile the pestilence of 590 still raged.[3] It was particularly violent in the Umbrian town of Narni, and the Pope, as we have elsewhere noticed, directed the bishop of the place to take advantage of the terror caused by the visitation, and persuade the heretics of his diocese to return to the Catholic faith.[4]

In August a famine seemed imminent in Rome, and Gregory ordered his agent in Sicily to purchase grain, over and above the usual quantity, to the value of fifty pounds of gold, and to arrange for its transmission to Rome by the following February. "There has been such a scanty crop," he wrote,[5] "that unless by God's help corn can be collected from Sicily, there is a serious danger of famine." The failure of the harvest was, of course, an additional inducement to the Lombards to pillage the property of their Roman neighbours, and towards the end of September tidings reached the Pope that Ariulf of Spoleto was making preparations for a great campaign, though it was still uncertain whether the object of his attack was to be Rome or Ravenna. Gregory instantly took measures for resistance. It seems that at various places on the Roman frontiers, there were no fewer than four Roman generals, each with a small force, engaged in watching Ariulf's movements. To the chief of these, Velox, Gregory sent the following letter[6]: "We informed your Glory some time ago that soldiers had been made ready to go to your parts, but since your letter signified to us that the enemy had collected, and was marching in our direction, we by reason of this detained them here. Now, however, it seems desirable that some of the troops should be sent to you. We therefore beg your Glory to admonish and exhort them to prepare themselves for toil. And when you have an opportunity, confer with our glorious sons Martius and Vitalian, and do whatever with God's help you shall jointly decide to be

[1] *Epp.* i. 38, 39.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 48.
[3] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 4, notices the ravages of the disease in Ravenna, Grado, and Istria.
[4] *Epp.* ii. 4.
[5] *Ibid.* i. 70.
[6] *Ibid.* ii. 7, dated September 27, 591.

for the advantage of the Republic. Should you learn that the unspeakable Ariulf is moving in this direction, or to the parts about Ravenna, do you get to work in his rear as becomes brave men, that your activity may still more increase your renown in the Republic." Gregory's plan seems to have been that, so soon as Ariulf set foot in Imperial territory, the Roman generals should co-operate to ravage the neighbourhood of Spoleto, thus forcing him to return for the protection of his own country. These precautions, however, turned out to be unnecessary. Ariulf, whether unwilling to face the combined forces of the Romans, or detained by domestic affairs, put off his expedition, and permitted the Pope to spend the winter in peace.

Meanwhile Gregory began to feel considerable anxiety respecting the security of his northern frontier. An invasion from the side of Tuscany was to be expected before long, and the Roman lines of defence were sadly inadequate. One particularly weak spot was the small Etrurian town of Nepi, some thirty miles to the north of Rome, in which there was not even a resident governor to organize resistance to the coming invasion. The imminence of the danger which was to be apprehended from this quarter, induced Gregory to venture upon an action which was extraordinarily bold, and which, indeed, can only be justified by the pressure of necessity. He actually presumed, on his own initiative, to appoint a military governor in Nepi, and he addressed to the clergy, senate, and people of the place, a letter, couched in authoritative terms, such as none but the Exarch had a right to make use of.[1] "To the most honourable Leontius, bearer of these presents, we have entrusted the responsible duty of taking care of your city, that by his vigilance in all things he may make such arrangements as shall be for your advantage and for that of the Republic. We therefore admonish you by these presents to render him in all things due obedience; and let no one dare to despise him when he is toiling for your benefit. For whosoever resists his lawful commands will be deemed a rebel against us, and whoever obeys him will be obeying us. If any should venture—as we do not expect will be the case—after this admonition, to treat Leontius with contempt, let him clearly understand that he will do so at his peril."

[1] *Epp.* ii. 14.

On account of the tone and tenour of this letter, some have imagined that the town of Nepi itself belonged to the Roman Patrimony, and that Gregory on this occasion was merely issuing his orders as landlord to his tenants.[1] But there is not a shred of evidence which can be produced in support of this hypothesis. I prefer, therefore, to explain the letter rather in view of the circumstances in which Gregory was placed. Communications between Rome and Ravenna were constantly interrupted, and there was no duke or high official permanently stationed in the Roman territory. The generals who hovered about upon the frontiers seem to have been practically independent; at any rate, they were subject to no controlling authority on the spot. Circumstances thus combined to force the Pope into the position of leader. His high position, his enormous resources, his energetic character, the respect which he inspired, all marked him out as the man who ought to undertake the general control. And this no one realized more clearly than did Gregory himself. He certainly did not hesitate to take command. We see him, now giving instructions to the generals, now despatching forces and supplies here and there as he thinks proper, or, again, appointing military governors to fortresses within the Roman district. The situation in which he found himself was peculiar, and Gregory availed himself of it to commit acts such as even the greatest of his predecessors under the weakest of the Emperors would scarcely have dared to venture upon.

In the summer of 592 the danger from Spoleto again seemed imminent, and Gregory wrote to the generals, Maurice and Vitalian, expressing his fear of an immediate invasion, and reiterating his former directions about the tactics which they ought to pursue. "If the enemy should make an advance hither, let your Glory also, as you have been accustomed, do what you can in his rear. For we hope in the power of Almighty God and of the blessed Peter, on whose festival they wish to shed blood, that they will find him too opposed to them, and that immediately."[2]

Scarcely had these instructions been despatched than a messenger arrived in Rome, bearing a letter from no less a person

[1] See the *Benedictine Life of Gregory* iii. 9, § 6.

[2] *Epp.* ii. 32.

than Ariulf himself. This document appears to have been written in menacing terms, and was doubtless intended to overawe the resolute Pope. To emphasize the hopelessness of resistance, Ariulf signified that the outpost town of Suana in Etruria —identical with the modern village of Sovana, famous as the birthplace of Pope Gregory the Seventh—had made a solemn engagement to surrender to him. Gregory was doubtful of the truth of this intelligence. However, he sent off a courier to Maurice and Vitalian, requesting them to investigate the matter. If it was found that the people of Suana were still loyal, hostages were to be taken from them, and new oaths of fidelity to the Empire exacted. If, on the other hand, Ariulf's information proved to be correct, Gregory hardly knew what course to recommend. As a Christian bishop, he could not in conscience urge them to be false to their oath; yet as a loyal servant of the Emperor, he could not quietly allow the town to be given over to the enemy. He endeavoured to escape from the difficulty by throwing the responsibility of a decision upon the generals. "Should you ascertain beyond doubt that the people of Suana have treated with Ariulf about surrender, or at any rate have given him hostages (as Ariulf's letter, which we forward, inclines us to believe), then give the matter your best consideration, lest your souls or ours be burdened in respect of the oaths, and do whatever you may judge to be advantageous to the Republic. But let your Glory so act that nothing be done for which we could be blamed by our adversaries, and nothing omitted which the advantage of the State requires."[1]

Almost immediately after the receipt of his letter, Ariulf himself appeared before Rome. At the same time, in co-operation with him, Arichis of Benevento made an incursion into Campania, pushing in the direction of Naples. Unfortunately, that city chanced to be in great confusion. The bishop was dead, and for the moment there was no duke or officer of high rank in command of the garrison. Gregory, therefore, realizing the advantage that the Lombards were likely to reap from this state of affairs, without hesitation appointed a tribune named Constantius to take command of the city, and on his own

[1] *Epp.* ii. 33.

authority ordered the garrison to obey him in the interests of the State.[1]

The Pope's action both here and in respect of Nepi was sufficiently daring, but it seems to have been passed over without remark by the Imperial authorities. Emboldened by the attitude of the Government, Gregory now went one step further, and actually conceived the amazing project of concerting a separate peace with the Lombards. So much, at least, we learn from a letter sent by him to the Archbishop of Ravenna in July 592[2]: "Do not think that my failure to answer the many letters I have received from your Holiness is due to laziness. It is due to sickness. For, as my sins deserved, when Ariulf came to Rome and killed some and mutilated others, I was so affected with sorrow that I became ill with a disease of the bowels. I had, indeed, been greatly surprised that your Holiness, with your well-known zeal, did nothing for the relief of the city and of my troubles; but I have now learnt from your letters that you have been anxious to act, but that there is no one with whom you can act in concert. I therefore impute it to my sins, that he, whose business it is,[3] is not inclined to fight against our enemies, and yet forbids us to make peace—though, indeed, even if we wished it, we could not make peace now, because Ariulf has the soldiers of Authari and Nordulf with him, and desires us, as the condition of his condescending to discuss the terms of peace with us, to give him the money for their pay. But the animosity of his Excellency, Romanus the Patrician, ought not to disturb you, since, as we are above him in position and rank, so also we ought the more to tolerate with forbearance and dignity any light conduct on his part. If, however, you have an opportunity of doing so, we trust your Fraternity will urge him to allow us to make peace with Ariulf, if we can manage it

[1] *Epp.* ii. 34: "Scriptis vos praesentibus curavimus ammonendos, ut praedicto magnifico viro tribuno, sicut et fecistis, omnem debeatis pro serenissimorum dominorum utilitate vel conservanda civitate oboedientiam exhibere, quatenus quicquid a vobis hactenus bene gestum agnoscitur, per praesentis temporis vigilantiam ac sollicitudinem augmentetis." As to the question whether Naples belonged to the Patrimony, see above, Vol. I. p. 297, *note* 12.

[2] *Ibid.* ii. 45.

[3] The Exarch Romanus.

at all. For, as he knows, the soldiers have been removed from the city of Rome,[1] and the Theodosians[2] who remain can hardly be persuaded to mount guard, because they do not receive their pay. Unless, therefore, we have peace, how can this city, abandoned as it is by all men, continue to exist? With regard to the city of Naples," Gregory continues, bitterly, "while his Excellency the Exarch is so zealous and active, we have learnt that Arichis is breaking faith with the Republic, and, in alliance with Ariulf, is vigorously plotting against that city, so that unless a duke is speedily sent there, it may already be counted as lost."

We can easily understand the Pope's indignation against the Exarch, and his disapproval of his policy. At the same time, we must admit that it was only natural that Romanus should regard the Lombard war from a point of view different from that of Gregory. As a matter of fact, he was probably inspirited by the turn which things had taken in the East. Chosroes, the Persian king, had been restored to his throne by Roman troops, and had made peace with the Empire on favourable terms. The Roman army, so long detained on the Eastern frontier, was now free to operate against the barbarians in the West, and the Exarch doubtless hoped that the spirit of Justinian might yet revive at Constantinople, and the glories of Belisarius and Narses descend upon himself. In any case, the Lombards were so divided, and there was so little cohesion in their state, that it still seemed possible and feasible to act upon the old Imperial maxim, and conquer by fomenting dissensions. Few things could be more adverse to the Exarch's plans than a peace between Spoleto and Rome. In the friendly professions of Ariulf Romanus had no confidence; about the safety of the Eternal City itself he had no apprehension. For the wretched fate of the people of the Campagna he probably cared little. That some peasants should be killed and others mutilated or sold as slaves, was to him merely an incident of war, to be remembered only in order that he might at the earliest opportunity retaliate in a similar way upon the Lombards. Further,

[1] It was of great importance to Romanus to keep open communications between Rome and Ravenna, by concentrating troops in Perugia. Cf. *Epp.* v. 36.

[2] A regiment (probably of militia) named after Theodosius, eldest son of Maurice.

he was perfectly aware that if Ariulf could no longer satisfy his men with the spoil of the Roman territory, he would naturally turn to the territory of Ravenna, and the money which Gregory paid to purchase a peace would be expended in hiring more soldiers to molest the Exarch himself. For these reasons Romanus was determined to prevent any peace being concluded.

On the other hand, Gregory's heart was set on ending the war, at least so far as he himself was concerned. He had no fancy for hostilities in which all the evils were inflicted by one party, and suffered by the other. He was weary of the never-ending story of ruined towns and desecrated churches and populous districts reduced to solitude. He hated the underhand policy of plots and bribery and treachery by which the Exarch endeavoured to make up for the lack of troops.[1] He knew well enough that the Roman forces were quite inadequate to encounter the Lombards in the open field, and he was rightly convinced that no effectual support was to be expected from Constantinople. Surely, he might well have argued, the withdrawal from Rome of all substantial assistance, the persistent indifference displayed by the Imperial Government to the fate of the city, left him free to consult the interests of his own people, even to the disadvantage of the Greek Caesar. Besides, the Pope felt strongly that these secular troubles were unfitting him personally for his true work as spiritual ruler. Broken and oppressed with sickness as he was, he still preached frequently to his people, but he mourned in bitter words that he could not speak to them as he ought. "How can I," he said on one occasion, in a sermon—"how can I take due care of everything around me, and yet collect my thoughts to consider what I am myself? How can I reprove and correct the wickedness of evil men, how preserve by praise and admonition the righteousness of the good? how terrify the one and charm the other? How can I think of what my brethren need, and see that the city is guarded against the swords of the enemy, and take precautions lest the people be destroyed by a sudden attack, and yet at the same time deliver the word of exhortation

[1] In *Epp.* v. 6, Gregory says: "Si ego in morte Langobardorum me miscere voluissem, hodie Langobardorum gens nec regem nec duces nec comites haberet, atque in summa confusione esset divisa." He seems to allude to some dark plot of the Exarch's for massacring Lombard chiefs.

fully and effectually for the salvation of souls? To speak of God we need a mind thoroughly at peace and free from care. Then alone the tongue is rightly guided in speech when the thoughts are undisturbed, just as our face is to be seen reflected, not in troubled water, but only in still. How, then, can I exhort you, beloved—I who am disquieted by so many confusing cares?"[1]

It is probable that, despite the Exarch, Gregory did conclude a truce with the Duke of Spoleto about the end of July, in 592, the expenses of the transaction being borne by the Church.[2]

The proceeding is certainly remarkable. As Dr. Hodgkin writes[3]: "Though probably a wise and statesmanlike measure, there can be no doubt that—to use a legal phrase—it was quite *ultra vires*, being entirely beyond any legal competency yet possessed by the bishop of Rome in 'the Roman Republic.' An archbishop of Canterbury negotiating for himself a separate peace with Napoleon I, at the time of his meditated Boulogne invasion, or, to take a less improbable contingency—a bishop of Durham making private terms for himself and the territories of St. Cuthbert, with the king of Scots, on the eve of the battle of Flodden; these hypothetical cases offer fair analogies to the conduct of Gregory on this occasion, on which he did indeed make a memorable stride towards complete independence." We cannot wonder that the Imperial Government should have regarded the transaction with extreme disfavour and indignation. For whoever reaped any benefit from the peace, it was most certainly not the Emperor. During the late campaign, it seems, Ariulf had succeeded in taking several Imperial towns—Sutri, Bomarzo, Orta, Todi, Amelia, Cantiano, and Perugia itself, the key to the communication between Rome and Ravenna. Gregory was so set on providing for the security of his own city, that he took no account of the serious consequences which would result for the Imperial cause in Italy if these places remained in the hands of the enemy, but, so far at least as we can see, concluded his peace on the basis of the *status quo*. Such a compact, however, could not possibly be recognized at Ravenna or Constantinople. Even the sluggish Romanus felt it incumbent on him

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 11, § 26.

[2] *Epp.* v. 36: "Pax . . . quam cum Langobardis in Tuscia positis sine ullo reipublicae dispendio feceram."

[3] Hodgkin *Italy and her Invaders* vol. v. p. 366.

to make a counter-demonstration without delay. Hence, collecting all the forces at his disposal, and utterly ignoring the Papal peace, he sallied forth unexpectedly from his marshes, recaptured one by one the conquered towns, received Perugia back from the hands of the traitor Lombard commander, Duke Maurisio, and finally marched at the head of his victorious soldiers up to the gates of Rome.[1]

The Exarch was received with Imperial honours by the clergy and people, and entered the city in state. He was escorted in procession to the palace of the Lateran, where the Pope waited to give him welcome. But the meeting between the two potentates can scarcely have been cordial; nor did Romanus do anything to make himself popular during his stay in Rome. He gave neither donations to the soldiers, nor shows to the people, nor presents to the churches or religious houses. Hence, when he quitted the city in the spring, taking with him all the Byzantine troops, even the mutinous Theodosian regiment, to reinforce the garrisons of Narni and Perugia,[2] the feeling of both Pope and citizens against him was more exasperated than ever.

The expedition of the Exarch and the loss of Perugia now roused the Lombards of the north. King Agilulf, who had by this time subdued the rebellious Dukes of Bergamo, Treviso, and S. Giulio, was furious at the treachery of the Romans, and determined on taking vengeance. So, in 593, he assembled his Lombards in strong force at Pavia, marched south, and, retaking Perugia on his way, arrived before the gates of Rome, probably in the month of June.[3]

Meanwhile, in his strangely mystical style, Gregory had been delivering a series of lectures on the Prophet Ezekiel. He

[1] *Lib. Pont. Vita Greg. I;* Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 8.

[2] *Epp.* v. 36.

[3] Weise is probably right in assigning the siege of Rome to the summer of 593, though we can get no clear confirmation of the date from Gregory's letters. Hartmann suggests that Rome was besieged between December 593 and March 594, chiefly on the ground that between December 593 and April 594 no letters of Gregory are extant. This theory is certainly attractive, since it accounts for Gregory's curious silence respecting the siege. On the other hand, it is scarcely likely that Agilulf would have undertaken a winter campaign, and Paul's language (iv. 8) implies that he lost no time after setting out from Pavia.

would gladly have evaded the duty, feeling that his mind "was too absorbed with troubles and fears to discern the meaning of the dark mysteries of prophecy." At the earnest request of his people, however, he consented at all events to attempt an exposition of the vision which the prophet saw upon the high mountain (chapter xl.).

These rather wearisome homilies will be read with revived interest, if we call to mind the circumstances under which they were delivered—the panic-stricken people thronging the broad floor of the Basilica of Constantine, the bishop, pallid and worn with disease, but eloquent and impassioned, and over all, the great mosaic head of Christ looking calmly down upon the crowd, as it still looks down on us. Day after day the preacher spoke to his hearers of the duties and mysteries of the Christian life, interpreting the obscure prophetic images, according to the principle then universally received throughout Christendom, that everything relating to the Temple of God in Jewish times was emblematic of the state of those who should in a later age become God's Temple through the Holy Spirit. And meanwhile, day after day, tidings came in of fresh disasters—the Exarch's troops had not dared to meet the enemy in the field—the Lombards had crossed the Appenines and swept down the Tiber valley—they had taken Perugia by storm, and put to death the traitor Maurisio—there was nothing to check the torrent of destruction till it surged with all its force against the walls of Rome. The fate of the Eternal City seemed trembling in the balance, and all were filled with the gloomiest forebodings. Oppressed with a sense of impending disaster, the harassed and disheartened bishop interrupted the course of his allegorical exposition to utter a weird, funeral oration over the departed glories of Rome.[1]

"What is there, I ask, to please you in this world? We see on all sides sorrows; we hear on all sides groans. Cities are destroyed, fortifications razed to the ground, fields devastated, the land reduced to solitude. No husbandman is left in the fields, few inhabitants remain in the cities, and yet these scanty remnants of the human race are still each day smitten without ceasing. The scourges of divine justice cease not because, even while they smite us, our sins are not corrected. Some men are

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 6, §§ 22, 23 Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 66.

led away captive, others are mutilated, others slain before our eyes. What is there, then, my brethren, to please us in this world? If we still love such a world as this, it is clear that we love not pleasure, but misery.

"What Rome herself, once deemed the Mistress of the World, has now become, we see—wasted away with afflictions grievous and many, with the loss of citizens, the assaults of enemies, the frequent fall of ruined buildings. In her we see fulfilled what long ago was spoken against the city of Samaria by the Prophet Ezekiel: *Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it, and gather the pieces of flesh into it.* And a little later, *The meat is boiled away, and the bones in the midst thereof.* And again, *Gather together the bones that I may burn them with fire; the flesh shall be consumed, the whole mass shall be boiled away, and the bones shall be dissolved. Set also the pot empty upon the coals, that the brass thereof may be hot and may melt.* Then was the pot set on when the city was founded. Then was the water poured into it and the pieces of the flesh gathered together, when the people streamed from all sides hither, to heat themselves like the boiling water with the business of the world, to melt away like the pieces of meat with the very heat they kindled. And of this city it is well said, *The meat is boiled away, and the bones in the midst thereof,* since in this city worldly glory once glowed with excessive fervour, but now that glory and all who sought for it have passed away. For by the bones the great men of the world, and by the flesh the people, are signified; for as the flesh is supported by the bones, so the weakness of the people is sustained by the great men of the world. But behold! already all the great men of the world are gone from the city, therefore the bones are boiled away. Behold! the people have disappeared, the flesh has melted. Therefore let it be said, *Gather together the bones that I may burn them with fire; the flesh shall be consumed and the whole mass shall be boiled away, and the bones shall be dissolved.* For where is the Senate? Where is the People? The bones are all dissolved, the flesh is consumed, all the pomp of the dignities of this world is gone. The whole mass is boiled away.

"Yet even we who remain, few as we are, still are daily smitten with the sword, still are daily crushed by innumerable

afflictions. Therefore let it be said, *Set the pot also empty upon the coals.* For the Senate is no more, and the People has perished, yet sorrow and sighing are multiplied daily among the few that are left. Rome is, as it were, already empty and burning. But what need is there to speak of men, when, as the work of ruin spreads, we see the very buildings perishing? Wherefore it is fitly added, concerning the city already empty, *Let the brass thereof be hot and melt.* Already the pot itself is being consumed, in which were first consumed the flesh and bones, for after the inhabitants of the city have perished, the very houses are falling. But where are they who once rejoiced in her glory? Where is their pomp? Where their pride? Where their constant and immoderate joy?

"In her is fulfilled what was once said by the prophet against the ruined Nineveh, *Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions?* Were not her generals and princes lions? They ran to and fro through the world, raging and slaying they seized their prey. Here was the feeding-place of the young lions; for boys and youths and young men of the world, the sons of men of the world, when they wished for worldly advancement, came together from all parts of the earth to this city. But now, behold! she is desolate. Behold! she is wasted away. Behold! she is bowed down with groaning. Now no one hastens to her for worldly advancement. Now none of the mighty and violent men remain to oppress and seize the spoil. Let us therefore say, *Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions?*

"There is come to her what was said of Judaea by the prophet, *Enlarge thy baldness as the eagle.* The baldness of a man is generally only on the head, but the baldness of the eagle spreads over the whole body, for when the eagle is very old the feathers drop from all its limbs. Therefore Rome enlarges her baldness as the eagle, since, in losing her people, she has lost, as it were, her feathers. Even the feathers of her wings have dropped, with which she used to fly upon the spoil, since all the mighty men are dead, by whom she made the world her prey."

Now the fierce warriors of Agilulf invested Rome. As the trembling citizens mounted guard upon the battlements, they beheld their captive countrymen, with halters round their necks,

driven away like dogs to be sold as slaves to the Franks. Within the walls all was wild confusion. The people in their extremity flocked as before to Gregory for comfort; but he, distracted with innumerable troubles, could speak to them no longer. "Let no man blame me," he said,[1] "if I preach no more. As you all see, our troubles have increased beyond measure. On all sides we are surrounded by swords, on all sides we look with fear upon the imminent peril of death. Some men come back to us with their hands chopped off, others are said to be prisoners, others to be slain. Now I am compelled to refrain my tongue from speaking, for *my soul is weary of my life.* Now let no one expect from me the study of Holy Scripture, for *my harp is turned into mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.* Now the eye of the soul is not open for the discernment of mysteries, for *my soul melteth away for very heaviness.* Now reading brings little pleasure to my mind, for *I forget to eat my bread for the voice of my groaning.* When life itself is lost, how can a man find pleasure in declaring the mystic meaning of Holy Scripture? How can I, who am daily compelled to drink from the bitter cup, offer a sweet draught to others? What, then, remains, but that while we suffer the penalty of our sins, we render thanks, mingled with tears, to God? For He who created us has been made also our Father, through the Spirit of adoption which He gave. And sometimes He nourishes His children with bread, sometimes He corrects them with strokes, educating them by sorrows and by gifts for their eternal inheritance. Therefore glory be to our Almighty Lord Christ Jesus, who liveth and reigneth with the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost God, world without end. Amen." Gregory closed the book with a sigh. The lectures on Ezekiel were at an end.

The siege of Rome did not last long. The Pope, and Castus, a Master of the Soldiery, who shortly before Agilulf's arrival had thrown himself into the city, were too vigilant to be taken by surprise, and the walls were too strong to be stormed. The Lombards, also, were disinclined to undertake a regular siege. They were afraid of fever, and apprehensive lest their own lands should be ravaged by the Imperial troops at

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 10, § 24.

Ravenna. Agilulf, moreover, feeling that he could not depend upon the fidelity of the northern dukes, was impatient to return. He had already effected the main object of his expedition; he had won back the conquests of the Exarch, had reduced Perugia, had shown unmistakably his superiority to the Romans in the field, and had acquired much plunder. Perhaps, also, he was not entirely uninfluenced by some superstitious fear, such as is said to have affected even the heathen Attila. He may have thought with awe that there was some mysterious power watching over the Eternal City, which, even if it did not save Rome from being taken, yet certainly exacted a fearful vengeance on those who used her ill. Alaric had taken Rome, and within a few months had died in the flower of his age. Attila had menaced Rome, and had died a mysterious death on his wedding-night. Genseric had plundered Rome, and in less than a century his nation had perished, and the last of his descendants was living in a strange land on the bounty of his enemies. Totila had twice captured Rome, but he too had fallen in the height of his power, slain as he fled from the battle-field on which the Gothic race and monarchy received their death-blow.

It was perhaps the parallel between Agilulf's position and that of one of these unfortunate heroes of the past that gave rise to the story which is found in the Continuator of Prosper, that the Lombard king met Gregory in person "at the steps of the Basilica of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles," and that, "being melted by Gregory's prayers and greatly moved by the wisdom and religious gravity of this great man, he broke up the siege of the city."[1] The truth of this legend cannot, in my opinion, be maintained in view of the silence both of Gregory himself and of Paul. It is probable, however, that negotiations passed between the king and the Pope,

[1] Prosperi Cont. Havniensis ap. *M. G. SS. antiq.* ix. p. 339. With this compare a vague story in the *S. Gallen Life* c. 23, which is reproduced among the later accretions to the biography of Paul (c. 26). But these last authorities merely hand on an ambiguous legend, which was current in England early in the eighth century, and I cannot agree with Dr. Hodgkin and others in regarding the report as historically important. The original notice of Prosper's Continuator cannot certainly be passed over so lightly. But if the incident related actually took place, the silence of Gregory and Paul respecting it is absolutely inexplicable. It seems more probable, therefore, that the story is a fabrication after the pattern of the familiar history of the meeting of Leo and Attila.

and that the former was eventually confirmed in his determination to raise the siege by an ample subsidy from the Papal treasury. At least, Gregory may perhaps be alluding to some such transaction when, at a later date, he proclaims himself "the paymaster of the Lombards," whose swords were kept off the Roman people only by the daily ransom discharged by the Church.[1]

So in the late summer of 593 the Lombards marched away with noisy contempt for these miserable Romans, who could only fight, if they fought at all, behind high walls; and, as they mounted the hills beyond the Milvian Bridge and took a farewell look at the half-ruined city, probably none of them dreamed that they were leaving behind a power which would yet prove strong enough to bring about the overthrow of their kingdom and nation.

The peril through which he had passed made Gregory more anxious than ever to bring the war to an end. He saw now the futility of making any private arrangement with the enemy in which the Emperor had no interest. The campaign of 593 had been provoked by such an arrangement, and Gregory knew enough of the temper of the Exarch to be sure that he would not hesitate to overthrow a second private treaty as he had overthrown the first. The Pope's absorbing desire now, therefore, was to bring about a peace between the Lombards and the Emperor himself. To smoothe the way for such a treaty on the Lombard side, he relied principally on Queen Theudelinda. Though a Catholic and a friend of the Pope, Theudelinda exercised unbounded influence over her people, and would certainly be an invaluable intermediary if only she would consent to play that part. It was unfortunate that at this particular juncture she fell into the hands of the Istrian schismatics, and Gregory for a while was alarmed lest the religious difference should set the queen against his plan.[2] However, though Theudelinda could not be persuaded to recede from her opinions about the Three Chapters, she did not on that account break with the Pope, nor did she make any difficulty about co-operating with him to secure a lasting peace. At the court of Pavia, therefore, Gregory could count on a firm and very powerful ally. To manage the Exarch, however, was

[1] *Epp.* v. 39.

[2] See Vol. I. p. 431.

not so easy, and Gregory had to proceed with great caution. That some negotiations took place we gather from a somewhat obscure passage in a letter sent by Gregory in September to Constantius of Milan.[1] "You have accurately and briefly informed me of all that has been done, both in connection with King Ago and the kings of the Franks. I beg that your Fraternity will by all means notify me of everything that has hitherto come to your knowledge. But if you see that Ago effects nothing with the Patrician, assure him from me that I am ready to spend myself on his behalf, if he too is willing to come to an advantageous settlement with the Republic." There are some indications that a temporary truce, valid within certain districts, was patched up. But the terms were broken by the Exarch,[2] and a whole year passed away without anything definite being accomplished.

In the spring of 595 we get a glimpse of the state of Rome. There was great suffering in the city. The corn supply had run short, and there appeared to be danger of another famine. Maurice himself was touched by the distress, and sent a gift of thirty pounds of gold and money to pay the troops. Other friends also sent presents of money. "The thirty pounds of gold," wrote Gregory to the Emperor,[3] "which my fellow-servant, Busa the Scribo, brought, have been faithfully distributed by him to priests, needy persons, and others. And since certain religious women have come to the city from the provinces, having fled hither after captivity—some of whom have been placed in monasteries which had room for them, while others, who could not be taken in, are utterly destitute—we determined to distribute among them what could be spared from the relief of the blind, maimed, and feeble, so that not only poor citizens, but also strangers who came here, might receive of the bounty of our Lords. The pay also of the soldiers has been distributed by the aforesaid Scribo in the presence of the Glorious Magister Militum, Castus, and all under due discipline received with thanks the gifts of our Lords, and repressed all murmuring such as formerly used to prevail among them." Presiding in

[1] *Epp.* iv. 2.

[2] *Ibid.* v. 34: "Scitote autem quia Agilulfus Langobardorum rex generalem pacem facere non recusat, si tamen domnus patricius iudicium esse voluerit. Nam multa sibi in locis suis intra pacis terminum queriter esse commissa."

[3] *Ibid.* v. 30.

this famine-ridden, poverty-stricken city, crowded with destitute citizens and yet more destitute refugees, fighting with starvation and the plague, contending with mutinous soldiers, kept in constant alarm about the enemy, and receiving small meed of sympathy or comfort from his Imperial master, Pope Gregory had more than his share of trouble. Yet another blow was now about to fall.

For some time it had been clear to every one that Romanus was doing all he could to obstruct the peace, and once more the Pope, driven almost to despair, began to meditate a private treaty with the Lombards. At any rate, he hoped, by hinting at the possibility of such a treaty, to force the Exarch's hand. Hence in May 595 he sent to a friend at Ravenna a very singular letter, threatening to make terms with Agilulf even without the concurrence of Romanus.[1] "Agilulf does not refuse to make a general peace if my Lord the Patrician will consent to arbitration on the matters in dispute between them. He complains that he was grievously wronged in various parts of his dominions during the armistice. And as he demands satisfaction for himself, if his claims are judged reasonable, so he promises himself to give every satisfaction if it is shown that any act of hostility was perpetrated on his side during the peace. As, then, it is clear that his proposals are reasonable, there ought to be a judicial investigation of the matter, so that compensation may be made for any wrongs done on either side, provided that a general peace be thus securely established under the protection of God. How necessary such a peace is for us, you well know. Act, then, with your usual wisdom, that his Excellency the Exarch may give his consent to the proposal without delay, lest it be thought that the offer of peace is rejected by him, which is not desirable. For if he will not give his consent, Agilulf offers to make a special peace with us. But we know that in that case various islands and other places will be ruined. Let Romanus take this into consideration, and make haste to conclude peace, that at least during this reprieve we may have a short time of rest, and the commonwealth may, by God's help, the better recruit its powers of resistance."

The threat contained in this letter is surprising. In order to force the Government to do what he wished, the Pope

[1] *Epp.* v. 34.

hinted that he was prepared to make a special peace, not this time with a subordinate duke, but with the king of the Lombards himself, although, as he frankly admits, such a peace would be seriously detrimental to the Imperial cause in Italy. Such a menace (even though it was nothing more) could scarcely fail to bring down on Gregory's head a storm of indignation. For some time already there had been considerable irritation against him at Constantinople, where the party of the Exarch was strong in favour. All this irritation now broke loose. Even the Emperor was violently prejudiced against him, and wrote off at once a fiery letter, expressing with extreme candour his opinion of his recent conduct, and accusing him, in effect, of being both a traitor and a fool. This letter was received in June 595.

The Pope, in his turn, lost his temper. Maurice's wilful blindness to the incapacity of Romanus, his heartless disregard for the sufferings of his Roman subjects, his foolish clinging to the fiction that he was still sovereign over all Italy, and, above all, the very insulting expressions in his letter, were enough to rouse the passion even of a saint. Boiling with indignation, Gregory dashed off a reply such as few Emperors had ever received from one of their subjects.[1]

"In their most serene commands, my Religious Lords, while reproving me for certain things, appeared indeed to spare me, but in reality spared me not at all. For though they politely apply to me the word 'simple,' they in fact call me a fool. Now in Scripture, when 'simple' is used in a good sense, it is often carefully joined with some word like 'prudent' or 'righteous.' Thus it is written of blessed Job, *He was a man simple and righteous;* and the blessed Apostle Paul admonishes us, *Be ye simple in evil and prudent in good;* and the Truth Himself admonishes us in the Gospel, saying, *Be ye prudent as serpents and simple as doves.* But I, in my Lords' most serene commands, am said to have been deceived by the cunning of Ariulf, and am called 'simple' without the addition of 'prudent'; whence it is clear beyond all doubt that I am called a fool. Well, I myself must confess that you are right. For, even if your Piety did not utter the word, the facts proclaim my folly; since, had I been aught but a fool, I should never

[1] *Epp.* v. 36.

have endured what I do endure in this place amid the swords of the Lombards. As to my report concerning Ariulf, that he was ready with all his heart to come over to the Republic, I am not believed; and that means that I am also accused of being a liar. But although I am not worthy to be a priest, I know that a priest is the servant of the truth, and that it is a deadly insult to call him a liar. I have long perceived, however, that more confidence is reposed in Nordulf or in Leo than in me, and now those who come between us receive more credence than is given to my assertions.

"If indeed the subjection of my country were not advancing day by day, I would gladly say nothing about being despised and laughed at myself. But this troubles me more than anything else, that the very causes which bring on me the charge of falsehood are daily leading Italy into captivity under the yoke of the Lombards. While my statements are disbelieved, the strength of the enemy is terribly increasing. This, however, I suggest to my Most Religious Lord, to think what evil he likes of me, but not to lend a ready ear to every one who talks about the interests of the State and the means of saving Italy, —to trust deeds rather than words. Further, I pray my Lord not to be hastily angry with priests, thinking only of his earthly power. I pray him to consider well Whose servants they are, and so to order his rule over them, that he may at the same time pay them the reverence which is their due. For in Holy Scripture priests are sometimes called gods, sometimes angels. For it is said by Moses, concerning him who was to be brought forward to take an oath, *Bring him to the gods,*[1] *i.e.* to priests. And again it is written, *Thou shalt not revile the gods,*[2] *i.e.* the priests. And the prophet saith, *The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth, for he is the angel of the Lord of Hosts.* What wonder would it be, then, if your Piety thought fit to honour those whom, for their honour, God Himself in His own Word calls gods or angels?

"Ecclesiastical history also testifies that when accusations against bishops were brought to the Emperor Constantine of pious memory, he received indeed the papers, but called together the bishops who had been accused, and burnt the papers in their

[1] "Applica illum ad deos" (Exod. xxii. 8).
[2] "Diis non detrahes" (Exod. xxii. 28).

presence, saying, 'Ye are gods appointed by the true God; go and settle your affairs among yourselves, for it is not fit that we should judge gods.'[1] By which words, my Religious Lord, he did more for himself by the humility he showed, than he did for them by the reverence which he paid them. Before him, indeed, the State had pagan princes who knew not the true God, and worshipped gods of wood and stone, and they paid the greatest honour to their priests. What wonder, then, that a Christian Emperor should think it right to honour the priests of the true God, when, as we said, pagan princes knew how to honour the priests who served gods of wood and stone?

"I make this suggestion to my Most Religious Sovereigns, not on my own behalf, but on behalf of all priests. For I am myself a sinner, and as I sin daily and continually before God, I think it will be some benefit to me in His terrible judgment if I am now daily stricken with continual affliction; and I believe that you render God more favourable to yourselves, the more severely you afflict me who serve Him so badly. I had before sustained many injuries, and when the orders of my Sovereigns came, I found an unexpected consolation. I will, if I can, briefly state what these injuries were.

"First, I was robbed of the peace which, without any expense to the State, I made with the Lombards in Tuscia. Then, when the peace was broken, the soldiers were removed from the city. Some of them were slain by the enemy, some were stationed at Narni and Perugia, Rome being abandoned that Perugia might be garrisoned. After this there was a worse affliction when Agilulf came, and I saw with my own eyes men tied by the neck like dogs, and led off to be sold as slaves in France. And as we, who were within the city, escaped from his hands by the protection of God, an excuse is sought for blaming us, because, forsooth, the supply of corn was deficient; whereas it is quite impossible to keep a large supply of corn for a long time in Rome, as I have more fully explained in another report. For myself, indeed, I do not care in the least. As my conscience bears me witness, I am willing to suffer any calamities if only I can pass through them with safety to my soul. But for those honourable men, Gregory the Prefect, and the general Castus, I

[1] Rufinus, i. 2; Socrates, i. 8; Sozomen, i. 17, recount the story, but without the words, "Vos dii estis, a vero Deo constituti."

am greatly grieved, since they did everything that could possibly be done, and during the siege underwent the severest toils in watching and guarding the city. Yet, after all, they are stricken with the grievous displeasure of their Sovereigns. It is quite clear to me that the cause of their ill treatment is not anything they have done, but their connection with me, that as they had toiled with me in sorrow, so like me they might sorrow when toil was ended.

"And whereas my Religious Sovereigns set before me the awful, the terrible judgment of Almighty God, I pray them by that same Almighty God not to do so again: for we know not how any man will stand in that judgment. And Paul the great preacher says, *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.* This one thing, however, I do say—that, unworthy and sinful as I am, I trust more in the mercy of Jesus when He comes, than I do in the justice of your Piety. There are many things concerning that judgment which men know not. Perhaps what you praise He will blame, and what you blame He will praise. Therefore amid all these uncertainties I have no refuge but in tears, as I pray that Almighty God will guide with His own Hand my Most Religious Sovereign in this world, and in that terrible judgment will find him free from all offence. May He also, if needs be, make me acceptable to men, but so that I may not forfeit His eternal favour."

Had Maurice been a Justinian, the above letter would have been sharply answered with a decree of banishment, and Gregory's work as Bishop of Rome would have been brought abruptly to an end. These autocratic measures, however, were no longer feasible in the distressed condition of the Empire; and probably Maurice, angry though he was, recognized that the Pope, in spite of his independence, was a valuable and loyal servant, with whose assistance he could ill dispense. No notice, therefore, was taken of the outburst. And Gregory, on his side, having relieved his mind, began perhaps to think that he had gone somewhat too far. At any rate, we hear nothing more from him about a separate peace.

But though his relations with the Emperor continued friendly, Gregory's feeling towards the Exarch, whom rightly

or wrongly he regarded as the cause of all his troubles, became more and more embittered. "We cannot describe," he wrote about this time to a brother bishop,[1] "what we suffer in this land at the hands of your friend, my Lord Romanus. I will only say that his malice towards us is worse than the swords of the Lombards, so that the enemies who slay us seem kinder than the State Governors, who wear us out with their malice and robberies and deceits. To have the charge at one and the same time of bishops and clergy, of the monasteries also and of the people; to be anxiously on the watch against the snares of the enemy; to be always suspicious of the tricks and malice of the dukes;—what toil and what grief this is, you, my brother, who love me so well and so purely, will be able truly to conjecture." In a similar strain he wrote to Anastasius of Antioch[2]: "What tribulations I suffer in this land from the swords of the Lombards, from the iniquities of the Governors, from the pressure and hurry of business, from the care of subjects, and also from bodily sickness, I am unable to express either by pen or by tongue."

Meanwhile the peace negotiations dragged on in a desultory fashion, and were the occasion of an incident which still further increased the unfriendliness between the Pope and the Exarch. Gregory's responsalis at Ravenna was a notary named Castorius, whose meddlesome activity and violent partisanship had made him unpopular with both the officials and the people. In the spring of 596 Castorius came to Rome to make a report about the progress of the negotiations, returning almost immediately with instructions to press vehemently for peace, since Arichis of Benevento was showing signs of activity, and Campania was therefore in serious danger.[3] With these orders Castorius redoubled his exertions. But the people of Ravenna, who suffered little inconvenience from the war, and resented Gregory's attitude towards their Exarch, were determined to repress the intrusive ambassador. Accordingly, one night some persons unknown affixed to the walls of the city a placard, reflecting in very injurious terms on the conduct both of Castorius and of the Pope. When Gregory heard of this he was greatly enraged, believing that the thing had been done by order of Romanus himself. He therefore replied to the insult with the following

[1] *Epp.* v. 40. [2] *Ibid.* v. 42. [3] *Ibid.* vi. 63.

proclamation, addressed to all the priests, deacons, clerics, nobles, monks, people, and soldiers living in Ravenna or outside the walls[1]: "Some one, at the instigation of the devil, has in the dead of night placed in a certain part of the city a placard, with accusations against my notary and responsalis Castorius, and with a cunning attack on myself in respect of the negotiations for peace. As one who speaks the truth ought not to shrink from being known, it is right that the author of the placard should come forward and prove the truth of his statements. If he does not come forward or make public confession of his error, then—whoever he may be who has dared to do this, or who has assented to such an evil device—we by the Spirit of our Lord and God Jesus Christ decree that he be deprived of the communion of Christ's Holy Body and Blood. If, however, because he conceals himself and is unknown, and so cannot be reached by the discipline of the Church, he venture, though conscious of his guilt, to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord after this prohibition, let him be punished with the stroke of anathema, and cut off from the body of the Holy Church as a deceitful and pestilent fellow. If he happens to be one of those to whom we send letters of good wishes—not knowing him to be an agent or partner in this matter—may those good wishes be of no avail to him with Almighty God. If, on the other hand, he comes forward and can prove his assertions, or if, feeling sure that he cannot prove them, he openly confesses his error, he is not to be deprived of the communion of the Lord's Body and Blood, or cut off from the body of the Holy Church. For we learn from the faults which we daily commit ourselves before Almighty God, to be indulgent to the faults of others, provided that due discipline be maintained."

In the same year the Roman arms suffered a disaster in the loss of the city of Cotrone, and the capture of a great number of loyal citizens, including many noble ladies.[2] Here and elsewhere the Lombards were willing to put to ransom the people they had taken, and Gregory was unwearied in his endeavours to obtain funds necessary for the purpose. The treasury of the Roman Church was severely taxed, money was begged and received from sympathizers at Constantinople, and in some cases bishops were authorized to sell their Church plate to redeem

[1] *Epp.* vii. 42.

[2] *Ibid.* vii. 23.

lost members of their flock. The money thus obtained was entrusted to responsible agents, who were instructed to drive hard bargains with the Lombards, and to spend not a penny more than was absolutely necessary.[1]

At the close of the year 596—or early in 597—Romanus the Exarch died, greatly to the relief of Gregory and his friends.[2] The friction between Rome and Ravenna had become intolerable. The Exarch very naturally had been determined to have his own way in Italy, but he had been embarrassed on every side by the action of the Pope. Gregory, for his part, had learnt to regard the Exarch as the chief obstacle to the carrying out of his most cherished projects for the salvation of the country. Doubtless there were faults on both sides. Gregory, perhaps, had been somewhat too officious, Romanus too little of a statesman to appreciate his rival's plans. The two men, instead of working together, only hampered and harassed one another, and the result was a deadlock. Hence it was with scarcely disguised exhilaration that Gregory learnt that his old antagonist was dead, and was to be succeeded by Callinicus—called by Paul Gallicinus—a man of much greater ability, and also well disposed towards himself. Not but that he was well aware that even with the new Exarch he was likely to meet with difficulties. He was warned by a friend in Ravenna that there were people at court who would do their best to prejudice the new Governor against him. "I thank you," he writes, "for putting me on my guard against two persons who have come with the Glorious Callinicus, although we have already had some very disagreeable experience of the first-named. But inasmuch as the times are evil, we bear all things—with a groan."[3] Nevertheless, with the fresh appointment the hopes of the Pope began to revive.

[1] See above, Vol. I. pp. 319, 320.

[2] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 12. The date is uncertain, but it must be placed after June 595 (*Epp.* v. 40), and before June 597 (*ibid.* vii. 26). A reference to the Exarch in a letter of May 597 (*ibid.* vii. 19) is hardly applicable to Romanus, and hence I gather that by this time his successor was established at Ravenna. On the other hand, the anathema against the defamer of Castorius, in April 596, seems clearly to be aimed at Romanus. I therefore put the death between April 596 and May 597, perhaps in the summer of 596, which would leave time for Callinicus to get to Ravenna by the following May.

[3] *Epp.* vii. 26.

Callinicus did not permit himself to be hurried into doing anything rash. During the year 597 and the greater part of 598 matters remained much as they were. In April 598 Gregory wrote to the Bishop of Terracina, peremptorily forbidding any one, "under the name either of our Church or of yours or under any other pretext," to be exempted from sentry duty on the city walls.[1] Still, we find him also issuing orders for the collection of property belonging to Italian churches which had been taken to Sicily, as though he expected that a peace would be concluded before long.[2]

For some time Rome itself had been unmolested by the enemy. We are assured of this in an interesting letter written by Gregory in May 598 to Rusticiana, a patrician lady residing at Constantinople.[3] In this letter the Pope complains of his correspondent's infatuation for Constantinople, and her utter forgetfulness of her native Rome. He says he cannot understand her attitude. She is greatly beloved by the Romans; why, then, does she not show that she loves them in return, and pay them a visit? A journey to "the thresholds of the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles," would greatly benefit her soul, and that of her daughter, the Lady Eusebia. He begs Rusticiana to consider this suggestion, and to undertake the pilgrimage. "If, however"—so he continues—"you are afraid of the swords and wars of Italy, you ought to mark carefully how great is the protection extended by St. Peter to this city, wherein, though with very scanty population and without military aid, we have been preserved for so many years unhurt amid the swords of the enemy. This we say because we love you. May Almighty God grant you whatever He sees will be for the eternal benefit of your soul and for the renown of your house in this present life."

In the autumn of 598 the tedious negotiations drew to an end. Gregory's agent at the court of Pavia was a certain abbat Probus,[4] and from him the Pope learned in September that the

[1] Greg. *Epp.* viii. 19. [2] *Ibid.* viii. 26.

[3] *Ibid.* viii. 22. For Rusticiana, see also below, p. 236.

[4] Probus abbat of the Monastery of SS. Andrew and Lucia, "quod appellatur Renati," is mentioned in *Dial.* iv. 12, 17, 19, 38, and in *Epp.* ix. 44, 67. In Appendix ix. to the Benedictine edition of the Letters (*M. G. H. Epp.* xi. 15) will be found a document entitled, "Testandi facultas Probo S. Andreae abbati concessa." The employment of Probus in the negotiations

terms of peace might be considered as settled, both the King and the Exarch having given their consent. This joyful news was at once passed on to Januarius archbishop of Cagliari. It seems that, in consequence partly of Januarius's neglect of the work of fortification, Sardinia had been ravaged by the Lombards, and the Pope now wrote to urge the metropolitan to look to the defences of Cagliari and the other towns, and have them adequately provisioned. "Know, however," he adds,[1] "that the abbat whom we sent some time ago to Agilulf has, by God's mercy, arranged a peace with him, according to the written directions of the Exarch. Therefore, till the agreement for peace be actually confirmed and signed, cause the watches on the walls to be continued everywhere with careful attention, lest during the delay the enemy should be inclined to revisit your parts. We trust in the power of our Redeemer that the inroads and plots of our adversaries will not do you any further injury." The articles of the treaty, however, were not actually settled till 599.

The delay in finally signing the peace was due, in part to the shifty conduct of Ariulf and Arichis, who were unwilling to co-operate with their king, or to bind themselves by the required guarantees; in part also to the conduct of Gregory himself, who for some inexplicable reason declined to append his signature to the agreement which, for the past seven years, he had been straining every nerve to obtain. This much we learn from a letter sent by Gregory to Theodore mayor of Ravenna,[2] who had been conducting the negotiations on the

for peace illustrates Gregory's habit of entrusting difficult and important affairs to the management of monks.

[1] *Epp.* ix. 11. The important part taken by the bishops and clergy in the defence of the country is illustrated from Gregory's Letters. In *Epp.* vi. 23 a bishop of Amalfi is compelled to reside in his city, because his absence might induce the enemy to attack it. In ix. 21 we hear of a bishop of Misenum receiving money to fortify the place. From viii. 19 we gather that at Terracina the monks and clergy shared with the citizens the duty of mounting guard. In ix. 162 Gregory intercedes for an abbat who complained that he was worn out with sentry duty. In ix. 195 Januarius is again admonished to see to the fortifications in Sardinia.

[2] Hartmann doubts whether the official here addressed as "Theodoro Curatori Ravennae" is to be identified with the municipal functionary who bore the title of "curator civitatis" (see above, Vol. I. p. 186). But there seems to be no reason for denying the identification, unless it be that we should scarcely have expected to find a municipal official charged with the conduct of

Exarch's behalf in concert with the abbat Probus, who acted for the Pope. "For some time," writes Gregory,[1] "our responsales at Ravenna have sent us reports about you, which have rejoiced our heart. But now our son the abbat Probus, on his return to Rome, has told us many other things about your Glory, which prove you to be in very truth our good and most Christian son. He has told us of your great kindness towards himself, and of your earnest desire to arrange a peace—an earnestness unparalleled even in our own fellow-citizens who have previously been in Ravenna. And therefore we implore Heaven's mercy to recompense you in body and soul both in this world and the next, because you have never ceased to watch and to act advantageously for the welfare of many.

"We inform you, then, that Ariulf has sworn to observe the peace. He swore, however, not as the king swore, but on conditions, viz. that no act of hostility be committed against himself, and that no one march against the army of Arichis. But this is nothing but a deceitful trick, and renders his oath as useless as if he had never sworn it. For it will always be easy for him to find some excuse for breaking his word, and the more we trust him, the more will he deceive us.

"But Warnifrida, according to whose advice Ariulf always acts, has refused outright to swear at all. And thus it comes to pass that we who inhabit the Roman district will gain hardly any relief from the peace we have so longed for, since we must still for the future, as in the past, be always apprehensive of our former foes.

"Furthermore, be it known to your Glory that the king's men who have been sent hither are pressing us to subscribe the compact. But we cannot forget the insulting words which Agilulf is reported to have uttered to the Most Honourable Basilius, to the injury through us of the blessed Peter,—though Agilulf himself has entirely denied having spoken them.[2] And we therefore think it prudent to abstain from subscribing, lest

such important negotiations. Other letters sent to Theodore are *Epp.* ix. 92, 116, 133.

[1] *Epp.* ix. 44.

[2] Basilius was some Byzantine official (cf. *Epp.* ix. 153) who had evidently made mischief between the Pope and the king, by repeating some incautious expressions of the latter. Of this incident, however, we know nothing.

we, who are petitioners and mediators between him and our most excellent son the Exarch, should find ourselves deceived in any respect through a secret withdrawal of any of the clauses of the treaty, and so our guarantee should be called in question and he should at some future time have an excuse for refusing our petition. Therefore we beg of you, as we have also begged of our most excellent son, to arrange that, before Agilulf's men return from Arichis, the king may speedily send them letters to be handed on to us, in which he shall command them not to ask us to subscribe. But if it serves equally well, we will cause our brother Gloriosus,[1] or one of the bishops, or at any rate an archdeacon, to sign the compact."

In spite of these difficulties, however, the treaty was at length signed. The two treacherous dukes were persuaded or coerced to set their hands to the agreement, and the Pope's signature, not being of any vital importance, was probably dispensed with. And thus Gregory at last had the joy of seeing the fruit of his long and painful labours. His letters of thanks to Agilulf and Theudelinda express his delight that there would be no more shedding of the "blood of the miserable peasants whose labour is profitable to us all," and his earnest hope that the terms agreed upon would be honourably respected by both sides. He was somewhat apprehensive, however, of the turbulence of the Lombard dukes. "We beg you to write," he said to Agilulf,[2] "whenever you have an opportunity, and command your dukes in the different districts, and especially in this neighbourhood, to observe unconditionally the articles of peace, and not to seek occasions for stirring up strife and ill feeling." The queen Theudelinda he cordially congratulated on all that she had done, and prayed her to use her influence to encourage the friendship between her husband and the Empire. "Saluting you with fatherly affection, we exhort you to use your influence to persuade your most excellent consort not to reject the alliance of the Christian Republic. For you are doubtless aware that friendship with us would be of advantage to him in many ways. Do you, therefore, as your

[1] If Gloriosus is here a proper name, it doubtless refers to Gloriosus bishop of Ostia (ix. 45). But the word may be an adjective, in which case the Patrician Palatinus (called "gloriosus frater" in *Epp.* xi. 4) is probably meant.

[2] *Epp.* ix. 66.

custom is, foster continually everything that tends to promote good feeling between the two parties. Exert yourself on every opportunity, that your good deeds may be yet more acceptable in the sight of Almighty God."[1]

The peace lasted for two years. But although there were no overt hostilities, the Pope was at first kept in constant anxiety, owing to the conduct of his restless neighbour, Duke Ariulf of Spoleto. Disputes about ownership and deeds of violence were of frequent occurrence, and Ariulf, on the pretext that he had suffered injury, continued to plunder Roman territories. Thus in August 599, we find Gregory writing to Donellus, the paymaster of the Imperial forces at Ravenna, reiterating his old complaints.[2] "You are aware that unless peace is really restored, no human aid, nothing at all short of the power of God's majesty, can avail us here. As, then, your Greatness knows the wishes of our Sovereigns and their great anxiety for the relief of Rome—an anxiety proved by their gifts—and as you know the dangers which threaten our city and the surrounding district, it is undoubtedly your duty to come hither with money for the troops. If you fail to do so, and any misfortune should unhappily befall us, you will have to bear the full responsibility in the sight both of God and of the Emperor." Fortunately for the Romans, Ariulf soon afterwards died, and the attention of the Lombards of Spoleto was drawn off by a fierce struggle for the dukedom between the sons of Ariulf's predecessor, Duke Farwald.[3] With Arichis of Benevento Gregory seems to have been on moderately friendly terms.[4] So the Roman district had repose for a period.

These two years, however, were signalized by another frightful onslaught of the pestilence. So terrible were its ravages in Rome, that there were hardly left sufficient men to guard the walls, and of clergy and laity, slaves and free, scarcely any were strong enough to carry on their ordinary duties.[5] At

[1] *Epp.* ix. 67. [2] *Ibid.* ix. 240. [3] Paul. Diac. *H. L.* iv. 16.

[4] He asked Arichis to help in transmitting timber from Bruttii for the Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul. See above, p. 7, *n.* 1.

[5] *Epp.* ix. 232: "In clero huius urbis et populo tanti febrium languores inruerant, ut paene nullus liber, nullus servus remanserit, qui esse idoneus ad aliquod officium vel ministerium possit; de vicinis autem urbibus strages nobis cotidie mortalitatis nuntiantur; Africa autem qualiter mortalitate et languoribus vastetur, quanto viciniores estis, tanto credo quod subtilius cognovistis; de oriente vero qui veniunt, graviores desolationes nuntiant."

Ravenna and in the cities on the coast the sickness raged with great violence, and Paul tells us that strange portents of evil were manifested in the heavens—"as it were, lances streaming with blood, while a strong light shone all through the night."[1] In Africa the pestilence was even more destructive. The following is a letter of consolation sent by Gregory to his friend Dominicus of Carthage[2]: "We learnt some time ago that a terrible pestilence has invaded Africa, and as Italy also is suffering from the same infliction, our grief is doubled. Amid those evils and other calamities our heart would break in hopeless sorrow, had not the Lord strengthened our weakness beforehand in anticipation of our need. Long ago the trumpet of the Gospel proclaimed to the faithful that, as the end of the world drew near, there would be pestilences and wars and many other evils, of which, as you know, we live in dread. But misfortunes, of which we have been forewarned, ought not to afflict us so excessively as unexpected evils might. Often, when we consider the way in which other men have died, we find a certain solace in reflecting on the form of death which threatens us. What mutilations, what cruelties, have we seen inflicted upon men, for which death was the only cure and in the midst of which life was a torture! Did not David, when the choice of the form of death was given him, refuse famine and the sword, and choose that his people should fall into the hand of the Lord? Learn from this what favour is shown to those that perish by the stroke of God, seeing that they are called away by that very form of death which we know was granted to the holy prophet as a boon."

Gregory's own sufferings with gout were at this time intense. "For eleven months," he wrote in 599,[3] "I have rarely been able to leave my bed. I am so tormented with gout and painful anxieties that life itself is to me most grievous suffering. Every day I sink through pain. Every day I look for the relief of death." In the following year he continued the same strain[4]: "For nearly two years I have been confined to my couch and afflicted with such pain from the gout, that even on festivals I can hardly get up for three hours to celebrate mass. I am daily at the point of death, and daily being driven back from it."

[1] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 14, 15.
[2] Greg. *Epp.* x. 20.
[3] Greg. *Epp.* ix. 232.
[4] *Ibid.* x. 14.

So again in 601 he wrote to a bishop[1]: "It is long since I have been able to leave my couch. At one time I am tormented with the pain of gout, at another time a fiery agony spreads throughout my whole body. For me to live is punishment, and I look longingly for death, which I believe to be the only possible remedy for my sufferings." "My body," so he complained to Rusticiana,[2] "is as thoroughly parched and dried up, as though it were already in the tomb."

The Pope's troubles were increased in the spring of 601 by a renewal of the war. This time the Romans were the aggressors. The Exarch Callinicus, emboldened probably by a revolt of the powerful Dukes of Trent and Friuli, made an unprovoked assault on the city of Parma, and among other prisoners captured Agilulf's own daughter with her husband Godeschalcus, and carried them off in triumph to Ravenna. By this act of treachery the Exarch doubtless hoped to force Agilulf to renew the peace on terms more favourable to the Romans. But he soon was made aware of his mistake. The Lombard king, furious at the outrage, made a perpetual alliance with the Chagan of the Avars, captured and destroyed Padua, devastated Istria, reduced the strong fortress of Monselice, and defeated the Exarch himself beneath the walls of Ravenna. Italy was thus once more at the mercy of the enemy.[3] In July 603 Agilulf marched from Milan and laid siege to Cremona, which he took on the 21st of August, and, if Paul is to be believed, levelled it with the ground. On the 13th of September he took Mantua by storm, having opened breaches in the walls with battering-rams. And such was the panic among the Imperialist troops, that the fortress of Vulturina surrendered before a blow was struck, the cowardly garrison fleeing to Ravenna.[4]

Meanwhile in Constantinople the throne of Maurice had fallen, and Phocas wore the diadem of Empire. The Exarch Callinicus, too, had been recalled, and Smaragdus the Violent was sent once more as Governor to Ravenna.[5] Although a passionate and wilful man, Smaragdus was not devoid of political sagacity, and he soon saw that he was unable, with the

[1] Greg. *Epp.* xi. 20.
[2] *Ibid.* xi. 26.
[3] Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 20, 23–25; Agnellus, 101.
[4] Paul. Diac. *H. L.* iv. 28.
[5] *Ibid.* iv. 25.

forces at his disposal, to cope with the Lombards. The king's daughter was promptly given up—she died in child-bed almost immediately after her surrender—and a truce was arranged with Agilulf, first, it seems, for thirty days,[1] and then in September 603 for eighteen months, *i.e.* till the 1st of April 605.[2]

Thus Gregory's last days were brightened by the tidings of the restoration of peace. Although his life was now almost despaired of, and he had grown so weak that he could scarcely speak, the Pope roused himself to dictate one final letter of thanks to Theudelinda, imploring her to use every effort to incline her consort's mind to peace, "that besides your many other good deeds, you may receive in the presence of God a reward for the innocent people who might otherwise have perished in the struggle." The dying Pope's hope that at last friendly relations were about to be established between Romans and Lombards, was strengthened by the fact that Agilulf's only son, Adalwald, had lately been baptized according to the Catholic rite in the Church of St. John the Baptist at Monza. "We could not but believe," he wrote to the queen, "that your Christianity would be anxious to protect, by the aid of the Catholic Church, the son you had received as a gift from God, so that our Redeemer might recognize you as His true handmaid, and might cause your young king to grow up in His fear to be a blessing to the Lombards. Wherefore we pray Almighty God to keep you in the way of His commandments, and to cause our most excellent son Adalwald to advance continually in His love, that as he is already great among men on earth, so he may be also glorious for his good actions in the sight of God. I have caused to be sent to my most excellent son some phylacteries, to wit, a cross with some wood of our Lord's holy Cross inserted into it, and a passage from the holy Gospel in a Persian case. I have also sent my daughter, his sister, three rings, two of them set with sapphires and one with onyx. I beg you to give them these presents yourself, that my love may be more acceptable to them, as being transmitted through you."[3]

So after many struggles for peace and many disappointments,

[1] Greg. *Epp.* xiii. 36. [2] Paul. Diac. *H. L.* iv. 28.

[3] *Epp.* xiv. 12. Adalwald was born in 602 (Paul. Diac. *H. L.* iv. 25), and baptized at Easter in 603 (*ibid.* iv. 27), Secundus of Trent standing as godfather.

Gregory on his death-bed had the satisfaction of thinking that there was at least a promise of better times in store for his country and people. The war, indeed, was not at an end. The Emperor could not recognize the Lombards, nor would the Lombards make concessions to the Empire. The continuance of the fighting, under the circumstances, was inevitable. But its acute stage was past, and the peace which the Pope had striven so hard to obtain was destined to be frequently renewed. And then, again, although it seems fairly certain that at the time of Gregory's death King Agilulf had not himself become a Catholic,[1] yet, under the influence of the Pope exerted through Theudelinda, he had shown himself ready to treat his Catholic subjects with tolerance and consideration, and had even permitted his son to be baptized according to the orthodox rite. Such an example could not fail to have its effect upon the chiefs and the people, and the result was that the ill-feeling between invaders and invaded, hitherto embittered by religious differences, began to be more and more softened and allayed. Well might Gregory hope, as he dictated his last letter to the Lombard queen, that the work which he had begun with so much pain would be continued, on yet ampler scale, in the time to come.

In his relations with the Lombards Gregory shows himself in the character alike of a peacemaker and a patriot. Through all the weary years of his pontificate peace was the great desire of his heart. To secure this he laboured incessantly. Undaunted by Lombard treachery or Roman coldness, he pressed both friend and foe with ceaseless solicitations until his purpose was achieved. Yet, eager though he was for peace, Gregory was not disposed to purchase it by ignoble concessions. He would not break faith with the Emperor, though the Emperor rewarded his patriotic efforts with ingratitude and insult; nor would he yield to a barbarian master the city which

[1] Paul, indeed, says: "Huius (Theudelindae) salubri supplicatione rex permotus et Catholicam fidem tenuit et multas possessiones ecclesiae Christi largitus est, atque episcopos, qui in depressione et abiectione erant, ad dignitatis solitae honorem reduxit" (*Hist. Lang.* iv. 6). Yet the silence of Gregory, and the letter of Columban to Boniface IV (*Epp.* 5), in which Agilulf is represented as being willing to believe as the orthodox if the question of the Three Chapters could be satisfactorily settled, seem to prove that the statement of Paul is unfounded.

was still to him the mistress of the world. There can be little doubt that, during these years of struggle, the fate of Rome depended on Gregory alone. It rested with him to decide whether the city of the Caesars should yet be the home of classical tradition, the abiding light of Europe through centuries of intellectual darkness, or whether, as the seat of some ignorant Lombard duke, it should gradually pass into decay and insignificance. Had Gregory chosen the latter alternative, it is impossible to conceive what would have been the after-history of Italy and the European world. But, true Roman as he was, Gregory made the other choice, and thereby has established an enduring claim upon the gratitude of the race.

Finally, Gregory's dealings with the Lombards manifest in remarkable fashion the growth of the temporal power of the Papacy. Already we find the Bishop of Rome a political power, a temporal prince. He appoints governors to cities, he issues orders to generals, he provides the munition of war, he makes a private peace, he sends ambassadors to negotiate with the Lombard king, he determines with sovereign authority what must be done in Rome, he encroaches without the slightest hesitation on the rights and privileges of the civil government. In this direction Gregory went further than any of his predecessors. It was not that he consciously aimed at usurpation; rather circumstances compelled him to assume a sovereignty which the rightful owners were unable to maintain. The weakness of the secular government was the source of his strength; the failure of others forced him to go and meet success. But whether or not Gregory desired to push himself into the seat of the temporal ruler, certain it is that at the close of the sixth century the Romans learnt to regard their Bishop as something more than an ecclesiastical personage, whose functions lay solely with spiritual concerns. Now for the first time the Pope appeared in the full exercise of an authority which, if unavowed and unacknowledged, was no less real than that of any secular potentate. The successor of St. Peter, as a power not only in heaven but also on earth,—such was the spectacle which Gregory presented to an astonished world. And the lesson, learnt then, has never since been forgotten.

CHAPTER VII

GREGORY'S RELATIONS WITH THE FRANKS

In 561 King Chlotochar I, sole ruler of the Franks, died. His career had been signalized by a succession of wars and murders, which culminated in the execution of his own son Chramnus, who was burnt alive along with his wife and children. A year after this, the abominable old savage was seized with a fever and expired, exclaiming with his last breath, "Oh how great must be the King of Heaven, if He can kill so mighty a king as I!"[1] He was buried with great parade at Soissons, and his kingdom was divided among his four sons—Charibert, Chilperic, Sigibert, and Guntram.[2]

To Charibert, the eldest, fell the province of Aquitaine—roughly the territory between the Loire and the Pyrenees—together with the city of Paris. But Charibert dying without male issue in 567, his lands were divided among the three surviving brothers. A convention was made with regard to Paris, that it should belong to the three in common, but that no one of them should enter its walls without the consent of the other two.

From 567, then, Gaul, as in the days of Caesar, was divided into three parts—Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy. The boundaries of these kingdoms cannot be exactly traced, as almost from year to year they were continually shifting. They may, however, very roughly be defined as follows.

(1) If an irregular line were drawn from the mouth of the Schelde to the neighbourhood of Langres, near the source of the Saône, the part west of that line might be taken to

[1] Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* iv. 21. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 22.

represent the kingdom of Neustria. It lay between the Loire and the Meuse, comprising the Netherlands, Picardy, Normandy, Maine, part of Champagne and Brittany—though it seems that the Celts of Brittany were virtually independent of the Neustrian kings. The capital of the kingdom was Soissons; the king who inherited it was Chilperic, a remarkable personage, typical alike of the vice, the savagery, and the pseudo-culture of the period. Gregory of Tours calls him "the Nero and Herod of our time."[1] He caused the death of his wife and of two of his sons, and his favourite punishment was blinding. He endeavoured to imitate the despotism of the Roman Emperors, and imposed upon his subjects a system of stringent taxation, levying, says Gregory,[2] "an amphora of wine for every half-acre," together with other exactions. He added four new letters to the alphabet, and built amphitheatres in Soissons and Paris, where he exhibited spectacles. He had no love for churchmen, whom he would often abuse and turn into ridicule. Of their wealth he was particularly jealous. "Behold!" he would say, "our treasury remains poor. Behold! our riches are transferred to the churches. None reign at all save only the bishops. Our dignity is lost and carried over to the bishops of the cities."[3] And with such unpleasant remarks he would again and again quash wills that had been drawn in favour of churches. No wonder that the bishops used to say that to pass from the rule of Guntram to that of Chilperic was like passing out of Paradise into Hell![4] Yet Chilperic was very superstitious, and even religious after a fashion. He persecuted the Jews with edifying zeal. He composed prayers, and wrote two books of sacred verses after the manner of Sedulius, though with an utter disregard of all the rules of metre.[5] He also wrote a rationalistic treatise on the doctrine of the Trinity, which he wished to force upon

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* vi. 46.

[2] *Ibid.* v. 29.

[3] *Ibid.* vi. 46. So also King Chlotochar ordered "ut omnes ecclesiae regni sui tertiam partem fructuum fisco dissolverent." Injuriosus of Tours refused, and the king, "timens virtutem beati Martini," gave in and asked pardon (*ibid.* iv. 2).

[4] *Ibid.* vi. 22.

[5] *Ibid.* vi. 46: "Confecit duos libros, quasi Sedulium meditatus, quorum versiculi debiles nullis pedibus subsistere possunt, in quibus, dum non intelligebat, pro longis syllabas breves posuit, et pro brevibus longas statuebat; et alia opuscula, vel hymnos, sive missas, quae nulla ratione suscipi possunt."

the Church; but the book was so heretical that a bishop to whom it was shown was overcome with horror, and would have torn it in pieces.[1] Chilperic's character presents a very singular combination of Teutonic barbarism and Roman culture. He was the most hated of all the Merovingian kings.

(2) East of our imaginary line was the kingdom of Austrasia, extending from the Meuse (though it also included territory in Champagne, west of the Meuse) to beyond the Rhine, embracing parts of Germany and Switzerland. Its capital was Metz, its king was Sigibert, an orthodox, well-intentioned but rather weak man, of whom I shall say more immediately.

(3) Lastly, there was the kingdom of Burgundy, the kingdom of the Rhone, extending roughly from the Vosges to the Durance, and from the Alps to the Loire, and comprising the provinces of Burgundy, Franche Comté, Dauphiné, Nivernois, Lyonnais, part of Languedoc, and part of Switzerland. Orleans was the nominal capital of Burgundy, though the court was usually settled at Chalon. It was ruled by "the good King Guntram," who for some inscrutable reason has obtained from the Roman Church the honours of canonization. He was a stupid, lecherous, good-natured man, whose chief desire was to be left to the quiet enjoyment of his coarse pleasures, without being compelled to go to war with his neighbours. He had many mistresses. When his last favourite, Austrechildis, was on her death-bed, she begged that her two physicians might be killed as soon as she breathed her last, and Guntram faithfully executed her wishes, though the doctors had not been to blame in their treatment of their patient.[2] Certainly "the good king" could be treacherous on occasion. After the death of his brother Charibert, one of his concubines named Theudichildis, made proposals of marriage to the King of Burgundy. "Let her come to me without delay, and bring her treasures with her," replied Guntram. But when she arrived, he shut up the woman in a nunnery at Arles, and appropriated her wealth to his own use.[3] In spite of his eccentricities, however, Guntram was not without redeeming qualities. He was good-humoured, and even benevolent when let alone. He befriended the widowed Queen of Neustria in her hour of need, and dealt

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* v. 45. [2] *Ibid.* v. 36. [3] *Ibid.* iv. 26.

honestly and generously with his nephews, for whom he seems to have had a real affection. He was, moreover, a staunch supporter of the Church, and was invariably polite and deferential to the bishops. "You would have thought him a priest of God as well as a king," exclaims Gregory of Tours, in admiration.[1] "With priests he showed himself like a priest," says Fredegarius.[2] Thanks to the good opinion of the clergy, Guntram early acquired a reputation for sanctity. Even in his lifetime he was believed to have worked miracles, and a woman is said to have cured her son of a quartan fever by making him drink some water in which had been soaked a portion of the fringe of "the good king's" mantle.[3] His people adored their stupid, genial prince. Yet Guntram was ever haunted by the fear of assassination. One Sunday, at a church in Paris, when the deacon had called for silence for the mass, Guntram addressed the congregation, saying, "I beseech you, men and women here present, do not break your faith with me, but forbear to kill me as you killed my brothers. At least let me live three years, that I may rear up my nephews whom I have adopted, lest mayhap—which God forbid!—you perish together with those little ones when I am dead, and there be no strong man of our race to defend you."[4] This royal saint died in 593, and, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Andelot, the King of Austrasia inherited his kingdom.[5]

A slight sketch of the history of the three kingdoms during the period between 567 and 593 will best make clear the political condition of the Franks at the time of Gregory's pontificate.

Sigibert king of Austrasia, the worthiest of the sons of Chlotochar, disgusted with the conduct of his brothers, who took their own maidservants for concubines, contracted a marriage with Brunichildis, the daughter of Athanagild, the Visigothic king of Spain. The princess, who was destined to play so conspicuous a part in the history of the Franks, was at this time a beautiful and brilliant woman, high-spirited and ambitious, with a remarkable talent for affairs, and a leaning towards Roman culture. Had her fortune been happier, she might,

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* ix. 21.
[2] *Chron.* 1.
[3] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* ix. 21.
[4] *Ibid.* vii. 8.
[5] A curious fable is told about Guntram by Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iii. 34.

perhaps, have been a second Theudelinda, the good genius of her kingdom, and have left behind her memories no less gracious. But her lot was cast in cruel places. Suffering warped her character and hardened her. Encircled by treachery, without a single friend whom she could thoroughly trust, she was driven to meet plot with plot and crime with crime. All her great talents were devoted to the gratification of her ambition and her passion for revenge. She made a magnificent struggle against overwhelming odds, and almost triumphed; but she was vanquished at the last, and her end was horrible. These things, however, were not yet. Brunichildis, young, beautiful, and witty, arrived at Metz, and was married to Sigibert under the most favourable auspices. Soon afterwards, through the preaching of the bishops and the exhortations of the king himself, she abjured the Arianism in which she had been educated and became a Catholic. Her husband was deeply in love with her, and she appears to have returned his affection. For a while she was happy.[1]

Meanwhile Chilperic of Neustria, seeing the prosperous issue of his brother's marriage, grew dissatisfied with his concubines, and sent in his turn to Athanagild, to ask for the hand of Galswintha, elder sister of Brunichildis, promising that if she were given to him, the concubines should be dismissed. The princess herself disliked the marriage, but obeyed the wishes of her father. She was received with all honour by Chilperic, by whom she was greatly loved, "for," says Gregory of Tours, cynically, "she had brought with her great treasures." On the day after her wedding she received from her husband, as her "morning-gift," the five Aquitanian cities of Bordeaux, Limoges, Cahors, Lescar, and Tarbes. After a while, however, Chilperic's affection began to cool. One of his former mistresses, the beautiful and atrocious Fredegundis, regained her influence over him, and Galswintha soon found her position intolerable. Smarting under the insults to which she was subjected, the queen complained bitterly to Chilperic, and implored him to permit her to return to her own country, even though he kept her treasures. The king dissimulated for the moment, and soothed his wife with soft words; but shortly afterwards he caused her

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* iv. 27.

to be strangled as she lay in bed. A few days later he married Fredegundis.[1] These events occurred in 567.

Furious at her sister's murder, Brunichildis now stirred up Sigibert to declare war; good-natured Guntram, who was himself rather shocked, was persuaded to help; and the united forces of Austrasia and Burgundy marched against Neustria. But before long a settlement was agreed upon, in accordance with which the five Aquitanian cities given to poor Galswintha as a "morning-gift," were handed over by way of compensation to Brunichildis.[2] In 573, however, war again broke out between the rival kingdoms, and Chilperic spread such ruin in Sigibert's territory, particularly in the neighbourhood of Tours and Poitiers, that Gregory says that the sufferings of those days were worse than at the time of Diocletian's persecution.[3] A peace was made in 574, but it was not respected by the king of Neustria. So, in 575, Sigibert prepared for a great invasion of his brother's realm. Procuring the assistance of some of the German tribes beyond the Rhine, he marched to Paris, then to Rouen. Chilperic, with Fredegundis and Chlotochar his son, immediately shut himself up in Tournay. Thereupon a large number of Neustrian nobles, disgusted at such cowardice, deserted to Sigibert, and offered to proclaim him their king. Sigibert was, of course, delighted, and sent orders to press the siege of Tournay, announcing that he himself was coming thither with all speed. Then Germanus bishop of Paris presented himself to the conqueror, saying, "If thou wilt go and renounce the thought of killing thy brother, then thou shalt return alive and victorious; but if thou hast another thought, thou shalt die." But Sigibert paid no attention to the bishop. All the arrangements were made for proclaiming him king of Neustria. At Vitry, near Arras, the whole army was assembled. Sigibert was raised on a shield, and all the assembled host acknowledged him lord of the Franks of Neustria and of Austrasia. But at the very moment of his triumph two pages darted up, and struck him on either side with strong knives called "scramasaxes." The king cried out and fell, and shortly afterwards expired, leaving behind him a young son, Childebert, only five years of age.[4]

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* iv. 28.
[2] *Ibid.* ix. 20.
[3] *Ibid.* iv. 48.
[4] *Ibid.* iv. 50–52.

Brunichildis was at Paris when the news arrived of the tragedy of Vitry. Her position now was one of extreme peril. Her husband was dead, the Austrasian army was without a leader, and she herself was in the power of her bitterest enemy. One cause of anxiety was removed, however, when a loyal Austrasian noble, named Gundobald, secretly carried off the little Childebert, and had him proclaimed king at Metz. Brunichildis herself, unable to escape, was seized by Chilperic, despoiled of all her treasures, and sent into banishment at Rouen. But the beautiful young widow had not resided there long before Merovech, son of King Chilperic, visited the place, and fell a victim to her fascination. Without much difficulty he persuaded her to marry him, and both then fled for refuge to the Church of St. Martin at Tours. Even Chilperic, who dared most things, shrank from violating the most revered sanctuary in the whole of Gaul. After some negotiation, however, he persuaded the pair to leave it, promising on oath that he would not attempt to separate them, "if such was the will of God." He received them graciously, kissed them, and invited them to a banquet; but a few days afterwards he invented a pretext for carrying off Merovech to Soissons. Here, a rebellion arising, the young prince was again arrested, shorn of his long locks, and shut up in a monastery. The end of his story may be told in a few words. By some means he effected his escape from his prison, and fled again to the sanctuary of Tours, whence he proceeded to Austrasia and joined Brunichildis. The queen, however, who apparently had married him less for love than to provide for her own safety, finding her husband no longer of any use, received him coldly, and the great "leudes" of Austrasia were openly hostile. Merovech, therefore, became once more a fugitive. In the neighbourhood of Rheims he was treacherously taken prisoner, and his captors sent word to Chilperic to came and fetch his son. Then the prince, knowing his father's cruel and implacable disposition, and fearing lest he should be put to torture, said to his servant Gailen, "You and I have hitherto had but one mind and one purpose. I pray you let me not be delivered into the hand of my enemies, but take the sword and fall upon me." So the squire killed him. But there were some who said that Fredegundis had him secretly murdered

by her own servants, and that this story was invented to conceal the deed.[1]

Fredegundis was at this time supreme in Neustria and completely mistress of the king. In her strange seductiveness and abnormal wickedness, this woman reminds us of the brilliantly evil heroines of the Renaissance. She had a wonderful genius for fascinating men. She "bewitched" them, says Gregory of Tours—intoxicated them with her cunning charm and with inflammatory potions, until they were willing to run any risk or commit any crime for her sake.[2] From slave-boys up to the king himself, she persuaded them all to do whatever she willed. Destitute alike of conscience or of pity, she hesitated at no crime, however monstrous, and never shrank from employing the most abominable means to gain her ends. With her, the art of getting rid of enemies had been brought to perfection. She contrived the murder of her rival Galswintha, of Sigibert, and probably of Merovech. Another son of the king, named Chlodovech, she caused to be killed at Noisy, and gave his concubine to the hangman.[3] On the life of Brunichildis, of Childebert, and even of Guntram, she made more than one attempt. Her own daughter, Rigunthis, she endeavoured to strangle with her own hands, in a manner peculiarly horrible.[4] The list of less important persons assassinated by her orders is far too long to quote here. King Guntram once called her "an enemy of God and man,"[5] and she is, perhaps, all things considered, one of the most unredeemedly evil characters in history. Nevertheless, by the sheer audacity of her crimes, she managed, not only to maintain herself, but even to preserve the kingdom of Neustria at a time when it was in danger of being extinguished by its powerful neighbours. Her unfailing resource—poison and the dagger—carried her through, and she died finally in an hour of victory.

King Chilperic met his end in 584. He was staying at his country house at Chelles, near Paris. One day he had been hunting, and, returning home at nightfall, was about to dismount from his horse, and had already put one hand on his groom's shoulder, when some one ran up and stabbed him with a knife,

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* v. 1–3, 14, 19.
[2] See the curious story, *ibid.* viii. 29.
[3] *Ibid.* v. 40. [4] *Ibid.* ix. 34. [5] *Ibid.* ix. 20.

first in the arm-pit and then in the belly. The blood poured from his wounds and from his mouth, and he expired. His people at once dispersed, and the body was left disregarded where it lay, until at last a bishop, out of charity, performed for it the last necessary offices.[1] The motive and the author of the murder were never discovered. Some suspected that Fredegundis herself had instigated the crime, through fear of her husband, who had found out her adulterous intercourse with Landeric. But this charge, at any rate, can scarcely be true. No one lost so much by the king's death as the king's widow.

So soon as she heard of the assassination, Fredegundis fled to Paris, carrying with her all her treasures and her little three-year-old son, Chlotochar. Thence, after taking counsel with her advisers, she sent a message to Guntram of Burgundy: "Let my Lord come and take the kingdom of his brother. I have a little child that I desire to place in his arms. And, for myself, I submit to his rule."[2] Good-natured Guntram responded to her appeal, and undertook the regency of Neustria. He gave his protection to Fredegundis and Chlotochar, and refused to surrender the former to the vengeance of Childebert. Fredegundis, for her part, soon took the measure of her champion, and had no scruple in playing on his simplicity. A curious instance of this is related by Gregory of Tours. "Guntram protected Fredegundis, and often invited her to banquets, promising that he would be her sure defence. One day when they were together, the queen rose from table and said farewell to the king, who would have detained her, saying, 'Take something more.' But she said, 'Excuse me, I entreat you, my Lord, for it happens to me, according to the manner of women, that I must rise to be delivered of a child.' Whereat Guntram was stupefied, for he knew that it was but four months since she had brought a son into the world. Nevertheless, he allowed her to retire."[3] After a time, however, Guntram seems to have suspected that he was being cajoled, for he dismissed Fredegundis from court, and compelled her to reside at a country estate at Rueil.[4]

In 593 King Guntram died, leaving Childebert, whom he had adopted, heir to his kingdom. Childebert thus became ruler both of Austrasia and of Burgundy. He was at this time

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* vi. 46. [2] *Ibid.* vii. 4, 5. [3] *Ibid.* vii. 7. [4] *Ibid.* vii. 19.

twenty-three years of age, and his late uncle had spoken highly of him as "a wise and useful man, pre-eminently distinguished for caution and vigour."[1] But he seems to have done little to merit this panegyric. His negotiations with the Empire and his expeditions against the Lombards have already been noticed,[2] and it is certain that these did not greatly redound to his honour or glory. From Gregory of Tours we get the impression that he was a somewhat feeble prince, whose virtues and whose vices were equally inconspicuous. The real power in Austrasia undoubtedly rested with the great lords and with Brunichildis. The nobles, occupying vast domains, and surrounded by throngs of retainers and men-at-arms, had acquired considerable independence during the long minority of their king, and were bent on pushing still further their encroachments on the royal prerogatives. They were still, however, kept partially in check by the intrigues and counter-plots of the clever queen, whose design was to build up a strong monarchy after the model of the Roman Empire, and to convert the humbled "leudes" into submissive servants of the Crown. King Childebert appears to have shared his mother's Roman ideas, but he was altogether too insignificant a person to carry them into effect.

In Neustria, likewise, the king Chlotochar II was a mere cypher, being only twelve years of age. Here again the real power was in the hands of the nobles, and to a lesser extent in those of the queen-mother, Fredegundis. In Neustria, however, the nobles were less insubordinate than in Austrasia, and the powerful Mayor of the Palace usually sided with the king. We should remark that about the year 593 this kingdom had become much shrunken, embracing little more than the Frisian, Flemish, and Norman coast-lands, the country in the extreme north-west. After Childebert's death, however, the power of Neustria revived.

The society which is depicted for us in the pages of Gregory of Tours is a strange chaos. On the one hand, we have the long-haired kings,[3] aping the Roman Emperors in their titles, their administrative methods, and the rights which they claimed;

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* viii. 4.

[2] See above, Vol. I. pp. 152, 162 *sqq.*; Vol. II. p. 6.

[3] On the long hair of the Franks, see the remarks of Agathias *Hist.* i. 3.

on the other hand, there are the powerful "leudes," living with great retinues on country estates, and constantly in revolt against the royal authority. The towns were isolated fortresses, administered by Frankish counts and by the bishops. The remains of the Gallo-Roman population had either flocked to the cities or were living as tributary serfs on the domains of the nobles. Much of the land was uncultivated; the roads were unsafe[1]; the communication between the different cities was almost destroyed; trade and agriculture languished. The old assemblies were rarely held, and the administration of justice was wretchedly inefficient. The most frightful crimes were of common occurrence. A king burns alive his rebellious son, his daughter-in-law, and their child[2]; a queen drowns her daughter, lest her beauty should excite the passions of her husband[3]; another queen tries to strangle her daughter with her own hands[4]; a noble buries alive two of his slaves because they married without his permission[5]; a bishop's wife amuses herself by applying red-hot plates to the bodies of her attendants.[6] Criminals, or supposed criminals, were punished with most shocking barbarity.[7] The grossest superstition prevailed everywhere, and downright paganism was not uncommon. It was said, "If a man has to pass between pagan altars and God's church, there is no harm in his paying respect to both."[8]

The Church was degenerate and full of abuses. The clergy were mostly of servile origin (for it was forbidden to ordain a freeman without the king's permission[9]), and they had the peculiar vices of slaves—greed, sensuality, undue subserviency to the temporal rulers. All intellectual movement was at a standstill. Simony was rife, bishoprics were given away by court favour, and laymen were ordained to wealthy sees. The bishops had become landed lords and courtiers. They meddled in politics, and are found mixed up in all manner of discreditable intrigues, and even bloodshed. They oppressed their parochial clergy, who, in return, resisted their authority to the

[1] For the dangers of travelling, see Greg. Tur. *De Mirac. S. Martini* i. 36; ii. 17; iii. 17, 43, 60; iv. 21; *Vitae Patr.* 17; *Glor. Conf.* 22, 46; *Mirac.* i. 84.

[2] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* iv. 20. [3] *Ibid.* iii. 26. [4] *Ibid.* ix. 34.

[5] *Ibid.* v. 3. [6] *Ibid.* viii. 39.

[7] *Ibid.* iv. 52; v. 19, 50; vi. 32, 35; vii. 15, 20. [8] *Ibid.* v. 44.

[9] Council of Orleans, 511, c. 4.

utmost and formed conspiracies against them.[1] Owing principally to the jealousies and dissensions of the rival kingdoms, the power of the metropolitans had declined. Hence the bishops had, to a great extent, emancipated themselves from all control, and rarely met in synod. In the sixth century, only fifty-four councils were held in Gaul; in the seventh, only twenty. The bishops allied themselves closely with the kings, of whom they became the counsellors and advisers, and whom, in return for certain concessions, they permitted to encroach upon the privileges of the Church. Thus in all that concerned its relation to the State, the Church had lost independence.

The excesses of the clergy, recorded by Gregory of Tours, are astounding. We read of one bishop who was so addicted to wine that he had frequently to be carried by four men from the table, and who was so avaricious that he made no scruple of annexing the estates of his neighbours. When one of his presbyters refused to give up to him some private property, he had him buried alive in a tomb already occupied by a putrefied corpse. He was utterly ignorant of all literature, and paid great court to the Jews.[2] Another prelate used to become so bestially intoxicated that he was unable to stand[3]; a third, on suspicion of fraud, violently assaulted his archdeacon in church on Christmas Day[4]; a fourth set himself to persecute to the death all the friends of his holy predecessor[5]; a fifth used to beat his enemies with his own hands, exclaiming, "Because I have taken Orders, am I therefore to forego my revenge?"[6] An abbat, mixed up in many robberies, assassinations, and other crimes, compelled a poor man to leave his house in order that he might commit adultery with his wife, and was killed by the outraged husband.[7] A cleric, who was a schoolmaster, endeavoured to corrupt the mother of one of his pupils, and afterwards, on being forgiven by his bishop, conspired with an archdeacon to murder his benefactor.[8] Two bishops rode armed to battle, and killed many with their own hands. They attacked, with armed force, one of their brethren while he was celebrating the anniversary of his consecration, tore his vestments, killed his attendants, and robbed him of all his plate. Many persons in

[1] Council of Orleans, 538, c. 21; Narbonne, 589, c. 5; Rheims, 630, c. 2.
[2] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* iv. 12. [3] *Ibid.* v. 41. [4] *Ibid.* iv. 44.
[5] *Ibid.* iv. 36. [6] *Ibid.* viii. 39. [7] *Ibid.* viii. 19. [8] *Ibid.* vi. 36.

their own dioceses they murdered.[1] Queen Fredegundis deputed two clerics to assassinate Childebert, giving them knives with hollow grooves in the blades, filled with poison[2]; another cleric she sent to make away with Brunichildis.[3] A bishop and an archdeacon were accomplices in the murder of Bishop Praetextatus in Rouen cathedral, while he was "leaning on a form to rest himself" during the Easter service. Though the victim shrieked for help, none of the clergy standing by went to his assistance.[4] Gregory says that he suppresses some episcopal misdeeds that he knows of, lest he should be thought to speak evil of his brethren.[5] But he tells us quite enough to enable us to gauge the character of the clergy of the Frankish Church. Certainly we meet with some instances of noble and self-denying men, such as Nicetius of Lyons, Germanus of Paris, and good Bishop Salvius, who, "when constrained to accept money, at once made it over to the poor." But, as a whole, the Gallican clergy, both high and low, were as brutal and degraded as the abandoned princes and nobles among whom they lived. The Merovingian society was utterly and abominably corrupt, and the history of Gaul in this period presents a record of horrors and crimes unequalled in the annals of any Western nation.

Such, then, was the people and such the Church with which Pope Gregory was now brought into contact.

It was not until the year 595 that Gregory began to concern himself with the affairs of the Church in Gaul. It is true that before this date he had sent two letters to that country, but they were occasioned by special circumstances. In the first, written in June 591, the Pope had thanked two bishops, Virgilius of Arles and Theodore of Marseilles, for their congratulations upon his accession, and had given them some advice about their conduct towards the Jews.[6] Of this I shall say more in another place. The second letter was directed to the Patrician Dinamius,[7] the Frank governor of the province of Marseilles, who had undertaken the administration of the Papal estates in that neighbourhood. Although Dinamius was by no means an unblemished character, he seems to have acted honestly in

[1] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* iv. 43; v. 21. [2] *Ibid.* viii. 29. [3] *Ibid.* vii. 20.
[4] *Ibid.* viii. 31, 41. [5] *Ibid.* v. 5. [6] *Epp.* i. 45.
[7] For Dinamius, see Greg. Tur. *H. F.* vi. 7, 11; ix. 11; Fortunat. *Carm.* vi. 9, 10; Greg. *Epp.* iii. 33; vii. 33.

regard to the patrimony, and in 593 had forwarded to Rome a sum of money amounting to 400 Gallic solidi. Gregory wrote him a letter of acknowledgment, and sent him as a present a cross containing some particles of the chains of St. Peter and of St. Lawrence's gridiron.[1] Shortly afterwards Dinamius was removed from his government by King Childebert; but the new Patrician, Arigius, consented to manage the Papal estates until a rector should arrive from Rome.[2] This was Candidus the presbyter, whom, in 595, Gregory directed to spend the revenues of the Gallican Patrimony in buying clothing for the poor, and English slave-boys, seventeen or eighteen years of age, who were to be sent to Rome and placed in monasteries. A presbyter was to accompany them on their journey to Italy, to baptize any who should fall sick and be likely to die on the way.[3]

In the year 595 Gregory was given an opportunity of drawing into closer touch with the Church in Gaul. Childebert, now king of Austrasia, Burgundy, and Aquitaine, and lord of all the southern bishops, desired Virgilius, the bishop of Arles, to apply to the Pope for the pallium and the Apostolic Vicariate in Gaul, and even wrote himself to Rome in support of the petition. Gregory was by no means loth to grant the favour. He realized that, by the appointment of a Vicar, his connexion with the Gallican Church would be greatly strengthened, and that he would be able to exercise a much more definite authority than had hitherto been possible. Also he

[1] *Epp.* iii. 33. The Gallican Patrimony was situated in the districts of Marseilles and Arles. Apparently Dinamius only managed the patrimony at Marseilles; that near Arles was committed to the bishop of that city (*ibid.* vi. 51). Hartmann thinks, however, that Dinamius succeeded Licerius of Arles as governor of the entire Gallican Patrimony. His conduct as rector compares favourably with that of the bishop, who kept the rents himself (*ibid.* vi. 51, 53).

[2] *Ibid.* v. 31.

[3] *Ibid.* vi. 10: "Volumus ut dilectio tua ex solidis quos acceperit vestimenta pauperum vel pueros Anglos, qui sint ab annis decem et septem vel decem et octo, ut in monasteriis dati Deo proficiant, comparet, quatenus solidi Galliarum, qui in terra nostra expendi non possunt, apud locum proprium utilius expendantur." The Gallic solidus was inferior in value to the Roman solidus, as is proved by the edict of Majorian: "Nullus solidum integri ponderis calumniosae approbationis obtentu recuset exactor, excepto eo Gallico, cuius aurum minore aestimatione taxatur." (See the references given by Ewald on *Epp.* iii. 33.) Gregory wished to avoid loss, by spending the rents in the country.

hoped that, by conciliating the friendship of the king and the queen-mother, he might be able to induce them to put an end to some of the scandals by which the Church in these parts was disgraced. Moreover, the request of the king was in strict conformity with precedent. The pallium had been granted to Caesarius of Arles by Pope Symmachus, to Auxanius and Aurelianus by Pope Vigilius, and to Sapaudus by Pelagius the First; and, as early as 417, Pope Zosimus had made Patroclus of Arles his Vicar. For these reasons, then, in August 595, Gregory sent the pallium to Virgilius, and conferred on him the Vicariate throughout the kingdoms of Austrasia, Burgundy, and Aquitaine, empowering him to settle minor questions by his own authority, and questions of greater difficulty in a synod of twelve bishops. Only matters of supreme importance were to be referred to Rome.[1] The bishops of Childebert's dominions were ordered to obey the new Vicar and to assemble in synod when summoned by him to do so; they were also forbidden to travel away from their dioceses without first asking and receiving his permission.[2]

In his letters to Virgilius and to King Childebert, Gregory took occasion to denounce in strong terms two abuses which were particularly prevalent in the Gallican Church—simony and the ordination of laymen to the episcopate. "I have been informed," he wrote, "that in the parts of Gaul and Germany no one receives Holy Orders without payment of money." If this was true, he declared, the whole clergy must be through and through corrupted, and must speedily perish. The seats of those who sold the Holy Ghost would certainly be overthrown. "Further, we are informed that, on the decease of bishops, mere laymen are sometimes tonsured, and at one step mount up to the episcopate. And thus one who was never a pupil himself is suddenly, through his rash ambition, made a master to others, though he has never learnt what he has to teach. But such a one is only in name a priest: in speech and actions he is a

[1] *Epp.* v. 58. Gregory is careful to emphasize the connexion between Rome and the Churches of Gaul: "Quia cunctis liquet, unde in Galliarum regionibus fides sancta prodierit, cum priscam consuetudinem sedis apostolicae vestra fraternitas repetit, quid aliud quam bona suboles ad sinum matris recurrit?"

[2] *Ibid.* v. 59.

layman still. For how can he intercede for the sins of others, when he has never bewailed his own? A shepherd he may be, but he does not defend his flock; he deceives it." Even common sense, Gregory argued, might have taught men the danger and absurdity of such a practice. "We know that freshly built walls are not burdened with heavy beams until their moisture is dried up, and they have had time to settle, else the weight will cause the whole fabric to collapse; and timber for building is dried and seasoned before a weight is put upon it, lest, if used prematurely while it is still new, it bend and break. Why, then, is this law, which we all observe in the matter of stocks and stones, not likewise observed in the case of human beings?" The Pope implored the king and the archbishop to put an end to this scandal. In the royal armies, he pleaded, only tried men were made generals; then, in the spiritual host, let not the leadership be given to those "who have not seen even the beginnings of religious warfare." [1]

[1] *Epp.* v. 58, 60. For the intrigues and bribery at episcopal elections in Gaul, consult Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* iv. 35: "Defuncto igitur apud Arvernum Cautino episcopo plerique intendebant propter episcopatum, offerentes multa, plurima promittentes. Nam Eufrasius presbyter . . . susceptas a Iudaeis species magnas, regi per cognatum suum Beregesilum misit, ut scilicet quod meritis obtinere non poterat, praemiis obtineret." King Guntram, on being offered bribes for a bishopric, once declared: "Non est principatus nostri consuetudo, sacerdotium venundare sub pretio, sed nec vestrum cum praemiis comparare; ne et nos turpis lucri infamia notemur et vos Mago Simoni comparemini" (*ibid.* vi. 39). But such conduct in a Frank king was exceptional. Cf. Greg. Tur. *Vit. Patr.* 6, § 3: "Arverni vero clerici cum consensu insipientium facto, et multis muneribus, ad regem venerunt. Iam tunc germen illud iniquum coeperat fructificare, ut sacerdotium aut venderetur a regibus, aut compararetur a clericis." Gregory of Rome attacks this abuse in many of his letters (*Epp.* v. 58, 60; viii. 4; ix. 213, 215, 218; xi. 38, 40, 42, 47, 50, 51; cf. *Hom. in Ev.* 4, § 4). He declares with emphasis that simony is heresy, realizing doubtless that heresy was the one charge which these loose French bishops were in deadly terror of incurring. Thus he writes: "Cum prima contra sanctam ecclesiam simoniaca heresis sit exorta, cur non perpenditur, cur non videtur, quia eum quem quis cum pretio ordinat provehendo agit, ut haereticus fiat?" The second practice objected to, that of ordaining laymen to the episcopate, may be illustrated from Greg. Tur. *H. F.* vi. 7, 9, 38; viii. 22. In vi. 46 Gregory says that in Chilperic's time "pauci quadammodo episcopatum clerici meruerunt." (For the royal influence in episcopal elections generally, see, besides the above instances, Greg. Tur. *H. F.* iv. 6, 16, 26, 35; v. 47; vi. 15, 39; *Vit. Patr.* 3.) Gregory of Rome wrote frequently against the elevation of "neophytes." See *Epp.* v. 58, 60; viii. 4; ix. 213, 215, 218. On the whole subject, consult E. Vacandard *Études de Critique et d'Histoire religieuse* (Paris 1905) p. 121 *sqq.* Les élections épiscopales sous les Mérovingiens.

The presentation of the pallium to Virgilius opened out for Gregory many opportunities for extending his influence among the Franks, and all such occasions he was assiduous to improve. In the September of 595 he wrote to Queen Brunichildis (whose "praiseworthy and God-pleasing goodness" he lauds in fulsome terms), congratulating her on the admirable way in which she had educated her son, and praying her, for the sake of St. Peter, "whom we know that you love with your whole heart," to extend her protection to the presbyter Candidus, who had been sent to take charge of the patrimony.[1] A similar request was made to King Childebert, whose sound Catholic faith was warmly commended. "To be a king," wrote Gregory, "is nothing extraordinary, since there are other kings beside you; but to be a Catholic, which others are not counted worthy to become—this is great indeed."[2] Unfortunately for Gregory's hopes, this Catholic prince ended his short and stormy life early in the following year, leaving behind him two illegitimate sons, Theudebert and Theodoric, aged respectively ten and nine years. The whole of Gaul was thus under the nominal rule of three children. Chlotochar II was king of Neustria; Theudebert inherited Austrasia; while Burgundy fell to Theodoric.[3] Brunichildis had now to face a yet fiercer struggle with the powerful nobles, who year by year became more independent and difficult to restrain. Even if Childebert had lived, it is doubtful whether the queen would have been able for long to hold her own against them. But the death of the young king, and the long minority of his sons, sealed the fate of the Merovingian dynasty.

The untimely death of Childebert was much regretted at Rome, for this king, with his Imperial ideas and ambitions, was inclined to court Gregory's friendship, while the great chiefs, striving to regain their old German independence, cared nothing for the frowns or favours of the Roman bishop. Gregory, however, did not permit the event to disturb his relations with Gaul. On the contrary, in this year 596 he made the journey of the missionaries to England an excuse for corresponding with a large number of influential prelates, as well as with the two child-kings and the queen-mother.[4] The English mission

[1] *Epp.* vi. 5. [2] *Ibid.* vi. 6. [3] Fredegar. *Chron.* 16.
[4] *Epp.* vi. 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57.

itself will be discussed in the following chapter. Here I refer to it only on account of the commendatory letters distributed by Gregory in the districts through which Augustine and his monks were intending to travel. It is noticeable, however, that no letter of commendation was sent to the King of Neustria or to Queen Fredegundis. The omission was probably due to the Pope's fear of offending Brunichildis, who would doubtless have taken it ill had Gregory asked a favour of her deadliest enemies, and might possibly have vented her spleen on the unprotected missionaries.

In 597 Queen Brunichildis requested Gregory to bestow the pallium on her trusted friend and adviser, Syagrius bishop of Autun. Of this personage our authorities on the whole speak favourably[1]; but he seems to have been distinguished more for his political shrewdness than for any sanctity of life. He was an ambitious man, who had formerly won the good graces of King Guntram, and was at present high in favour with Brunichildis, who was anxious to reward his services by procuring him the coveted distinction of the pallium. On the Apostolic See, however, Syagrius had no claim. He was not even a metropolitan, and the Archbishop of Lyons, whose suffragan he was, might not unreasonably complain if a dignity, which it seems was denied to himself, was conferred without cause on one of his subordinates.

Still, the Bishop of Autun was one of the most influential prelates in Gaul; it was highly expedient to attach him to the Roman interest; and in any case, it was well-nigh impossible to refuse the request of Brunichildis. The Pope, therefore, put the best face he could on the matter, and, after asking and receiving the permission of the Emperor,[2] wrote to the queen, expressing his willingness to grant the desired favour. Before the pallium could be sent, however, some technical

[1] Greg. Tur. *Vita S. Aridii* 35 calls him "venerabilem et egregium antistitem." Greg. *Epp.* xiii. 11, "reverendae memoriae episcopum." Fortunatus *Misc.* v. 6, "domino sancto apostolicae sedis dignissimo Syagrio" (Migne *P. L.* lxxxviii. p. 191). Ado. *Chron.* "vir summae sanctitatis" (Migne *P. L.* cxxiii. p. 111). He is commemorated as a saint on August 27.

[2] *Epp.* viii. 4: "Propter quod et serenissimi domini imperatoris, quantum nobis diaconus noster, qui apud eum responsa ecclesiae faciebat, innotuit, prona voluntas est et concedi hoc omnino desiderat." For the grant of the pallium by the Emperor, see above, Vol. I. p. 436, *note* 3.

difficulties had to be overcome. In the first place, the messenger whom Brunichildis had sent to receive the gift was found to be implicated in the schism of the Three Chapters; then again the queen had desired that the honour should appear to be conferred spontaneously by Gregory, and not in consequence of her petition; moreover, Syagrius himself had omitted to ask for it, although, in accordance with ancient custom, it was bestowed only when a formal request had been made.[1] Nevertheless, that the queen might not fancy that he was inventing excuses to avoid complying with her wishes, Gregory promised that the pallium should be sent to Candidus, rector of the patrimony in Gaul, who was to deliver it to Syagrius, provided that the latter presented a petition, signed by some of the bishops of the province, praying that the use of it might be granted to him. This provision was certainly clever. It contained nothing to which the queen or Syagrius could decently object, and yet the spectacle of the proudest and most powerful of the Gallican bishops, presenting his humble petition to the Papal representative, and receiving at his hands the coveted honour, could scarcely fail to increase the prestige of the Apostolic See.[2]

In return for his complaisance in the matter of the pallium, Gregory pressed the queen to institute some reforms in the Church in her dominions. He implored her to crush out simony, to put down the practice of consecrating laymen to the episcopate, and to recall to the unity of the Faith such of her subjects as were entangled in the schism of the Three Chapters —the sole object of whom, says Gregory, was to escape ecclesiastical discipline.[3] He further demanded the suppression

[1] "Prisca consuetudo optinuit, ut honor pallii nisi exigentibus causarum meritis et fortiter postulanti dari non debeat." In conferring the pallium on Virgilius, Gregory refers to the double petition of the archbishop and King Childebert: "Libenti ergo animo postulata concedimus, ne aut vobis quicquam de debito honore subtrahere aut . . . Childeberti regis petitionem contempsisse videamur" (*Epp.* v. 58).

[2] *Epp.* viii. 4.

[3] Of the ignorance and perversity of these people the Pope speaks in strong terms: "Non aliud in ignorantiae suae hactenus caecitate volvunt (sc. schismatici) nisi ut ecclesiasticam fugiant disciplinam et perverse habeant, ut voluerint, vivendi licentiam; quia nec quid defendant nec quid sequantur, intellegunt. . . . Sed ita illos erroris labes inbibit, ut ignorantiae suae credentes universam ecclesiam atque omnes quattuor patriarchas non ratione sed

of the prevailing idolatrous worship of trees and the heads of animals.[1]

The conversion of the Franks to Christianity was evidently still very incomplete. Many openly remained heathens, others were baptized without ceasing to practise their pagan rites. Men who were nominally Christians and frequented the services of the Church, still worshipped trees and stones and fountains, and offered the heads of animals in sacrifice to their ancient deities. In the country districts of Austrasia and in Northern Neustria paganism was predominant. The bishops and clergy of the towns made little headway against it. If they were Romans, they were separated in sentiment and language from the people whom they endeavoured to convert. If they were Franks, they were generally persons appointed by court favour, who did not interest themselves in the conversion of rude soldiers and rustics. Hence the fight against paganism was generally sustained, not by the bishops, but by monks and hermits like Wulfilaich of Trier, who found that even in their solitudes there was work for them to do. The story of Wulfilaich, in this connexion, will be found instructive. This Lombard monk, who had been induced by his reverence for St. Martin to visit Tours, and afterwards founded a monastery in the district of Trier, was persuaded by Gregory of Tours to relate his history. "I went," he said,[2] "into the territory of Trier and constructed on this mountain the dwelling which you

malitiosa tantummodo mente refugiant, ita ut is qui ad nos a vestra excellentia missus est, cum quaereretur a nobis, cur universali ecclesia separatus existeret, se ignorare professus est. Sed neque quid diceret neque quid audiret, valuit scire."

[1] For the prevalence of such idolatrous worship among the barbarians, see Agathias *Hist.* i. 7: Δένδρα τε γάρ τινα ἱλάσκονται καὶ ῥεῖθρα ποταμῶν καὶ λόφους καὶ φάραγγας καὶ τούτοις ὥσπερ ὅσια δρῶντες ἵππους τε καὶ βόας καὶ ἄλλα ἄττα μυρία καρατομοῦντες ἐπιθειάζουσιν. (Alemanni): Greg. *Dial.* iii. 27, 28; *Vita S. Barbati* (*AA. SS.* 19 *Feb.*) (Lombards): Greg. *Epp.* iii. 59; iv. 23, 26, 27, 29; v. 38; viii. 1, 19 (rustics in Italy and the islands): Conc. Arelat. a. 452, c. 23; Concil. Turon. a. 567, c. 22; Concil. Autissiod. c. 1; Sulp. Sev. *Vita S. Mart.* 13 (Gaul): Greg. *Epp.* viii. 29 (Angli). Gregory's words here are: "Hoc quoque pariter hortamur, ut et ceteros subiectos vestros sub disciplinae debeatis moderatione restringere, ut idolis non immolent, cultores arborum non existant, de animalium capitibus sacrificia sacrilega non exhibeant, quia pervenit ad nos, quod multi Christianorum et ad ecclesias occurrant et quod dici nefas est a culturis daemonum non abscedant." (Cf. Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* v. 44.)

[2] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* viii. 15.

see. I found here an image of Diana"—some statue, perhaps, which had once adorned the pleasure-grounds of some Gallo-Roman millionaire, and chance had preserved intact amid the ruins—" which the people, still unbelievers, worshipped as a deity. Here I erected a column, on which I stood barefoot, suffering greatly. When winter came I was crippled with the icy cold, so that my toe-nails often dropped off, and the icicles hung down from my beard like candles. My food was a little bread, a few vegetables, and a little water. But when the people from the neighbouring villages began to flock to me, I preached to them continually that Diana was nothing, that the idols were nothing, that the worship paid to them was nothing, and I told them that the songs they sang while drinking and feasting were unworthy of the Deity. Their duty, I said, was to offer the sacrifice of praise to the Almighty God, who made the heaven and the earth. And often I prayed that the Lord would deign to destroy the idol and to deliver the people from their errors. After a while the Lord of His mercy turned the hearts of the rustics, and inclined their ears to the words of my mouth, that they should forsake their idols and follow God. Then I called some of them together, that with their help I might throw down this enormous idol, which I could not destroy unaided; for I had already with my own hands broken in pieces the other images which were easily destroyed. Many persons, therefore, assembled where the statue of Diana stood, and they put ropes round it and began to pull, but their efforts were unavailing. Then, hastening to the church, I flung myself upon the ground, and with tears implored the mercy of God, that where human efforts failed, He might put forth His divine power to destroy. When my prayer was ended, I left the church and joined the workmen: we seized the rope, and at the very first pull the idol crashed to the ground. It was then broken in pieces with iron mallets and reduced to powder." There were, however, many other idols and many other pagans lingering in different parts of Gaul, and to these Pope Gregory now directed the queen's attention. But neither royal mandate nor the authority of the Church had power to extirpate paganism, deep-rooted as it was in the heart and soul of the people. So far, indeed, was Frankish heathenism from being crushed out by Christianity, that in the end the Church was

compelled to recognize it under Christian forms, and to give it a place within the pale of Christianity itself. The gods were conquered; but, despite the efforts of monks and Popes, they did not die.

Gregory was determined to get as much advantage as he could out of his forced gift to Syagrius. For more than a year he delayed sending the pallium. At last, however, he forwarded it to Gaul by the abbat Cyriacus, together with a cordial letter, in which he gave Syagrius permission to wear the vestment, and ordered that in future Autun should take rank next after the metropolitan see of Lyons.[1] But —and in this lies the point of it all—Syagrius was not actually to receive the pallium until he had given a solemn promise to summon a synod for the correction of abuses.[2] At this council it was Gregory's desire that Syagrius should preside, and Cyriacus take part. The assembled bishops were to pass laws against simony, against the elevation of laymen to high places in the church, and against the residence of females in the houses of clerics. Arrangements were also to be made for holding a council at least once a year. A full report of the proceedings was to be forwarded to Rome by Syagrius, and also by Aregius bishop of Gap.[3]

Since 595 Gregory had become well acquainted with the state of the Gallican Church. The reports of Augustine, of a certain John "the Regionary" who had been sent into Gaul on some business, and particularly of Candidus, the rector of the patrimony, had enabled him to estimate pretty accurately the depths of the degradation into which the clergy among the Franks had sunk. Now he exerted all his influence to strike a blow at the corruption. The abbat Cyriacus was sent to

[1] *Epp.* ix. 222: "Cuius ne indumenti munificentiam nudam videamur quodam modo contulisse, hoc etiam pariter prospeximus concedendum, ut metropolis suo per omnia loco et honore servato ecclesia civitatis Augustodunis, cui omnipotens Deus praesse te voluit, post Lugdunensem ecclesiam esse debeat et hunc sibi locum ac ordinem ex nostra auctoritatis indulgentia vindicare. Ceteros vero episcopos secundum ordinationis suae tempus sive ad consedendum in concilio seu ad subscribendum vel in qualibet alia re sua attendere loca decernimus, et suorum sibi praerogativam ordinum vindicare, quia omnino rationis ordo nos ammonet, ut cum usu pallii aliqua simul largiri privilegia debeamus." This privilege was certainly not observed in subsequent councils.

[2] *Epp.* ix. 222.

[3] *Ibid.* ix. 218, 219.

superintend the work of reformation, Syagrius was bribed by the pallium to support it, and the metropolitans of Gaul were asked to use their influence to bring about the desired result. A circular letter was addressed to the archbishops of Lyons, Arles, and Vienne, as well as to Syagrius, exhorting them in earnest terms to do their utmost to promote the synod for the suppression of the abuses. On the subject of simony Gregory was particularly emphatic. "We are deeply grieved," he writes,[1] "that money should have any influence on the bestowal of ecclesiastical offices, and that the things which are sacred should thus be made secular. He who seeks to purchase the office with money is anxious in his folly to be a priest, not in reality, but in name only. And what is the result? Is it not this, that there is no examination of his conduct, no anxiety felt about his character, no scrutiny into his past life? He only is considered deserving who has the means to pay. Yet if the matter be weighed in the true balance, he who out of a desire for vain-glory seeks to obtain what ought to be a post of usefulness, is the more unworthy of the honour from the very fact that he seeks it." Some men, Gregory continued, endeavoured to excuse the practice on the ground that the money so obtained was expended on deserving objects—in giving alms to the poor, building hospitals or monasteries, and the like. But this is mere sophism. "It is no charity to give to the poor the produce of unlawful gains. The only charity which is acceptable to our Redeemer is that which is bestowed from property which is lawfully ours and righteously acquired. It is one thing to give alms because we have sinned, it is another thing to commit sin in order to give alms."

Besides the metropolitans, Queen Brunichildis and the two young kings were appealed to by the Pope. He begged them to help him, partly for the good of their own souls, since they were responsible to God for the evils which they allowed to flourish in their dominions, and partly for the sake of their country, since bad bishops, by their intercession, only drew down the wrath of God upon the people. He pointed out that, when simony prevailed, poor men of blameless life were contemptuously rejected, and Holy Orders were conferred on those whose sins were rendered acceptable by their wealth.

[1] *Epp.* ix. 218.

What could be expected from a man who bought with a price the honour of so great a sacrament? What could be the effect upon society but inevitable corruption? and who could shield the people from the assaults of evil when their leader had so fatally exposed himself? Then, passing to the subject of the consecration of laymen, the Pope went on to show that if men who were unfit and unprepared were raised to the episcopal dignity, they could not be expected to do good to those committed to their charge. How could they guide others, who needed a guide themselves? how could they teach, when they had never themselves been taught? or how could they act as generals, when they had never served in the rank-and-file? Surely they must be ashamed to issue orders to others which they were utterly unable themselves to carry out. "Therefore strive earnestly, I pray you, to expel these detestable evils from your land. Listen to no excuses, accept no suggestions, which will be to the injury of your own souls. For without doubt he who does not correct a crime which he has the power of correcting, incurs the same guilt as he who perpetrates the evil deed. Wherefore, that you may be able to offer a great gift to Almighty God, issue your orders for the assembling of a synod, at which, in the presence of our beloved son, the abbat Cyriacus, a decree may be passed and confirmed by an anathema, that no one shall give or receive a price for any office in the Church, and that no one shall pass without preparation from the ranks of the laity to the priesthood. So will our Redeemer, whose priests you save from perishing from the inward assaults of the enemy, reward you for your good deed, both in this life and in that which is to come." These letters were written in July 599.[1]

[1] *Epp.* ix. 213, 215. The following passage on the elevation of neophytes is typical: "Nec hoc quoque malum sollicitudo nostra patitur negligenter omittere, quod quidam instinctu gloriae inanis inlecti ex laico repente habitu sacerdotii honorem arripiunt et, quod dicere pudet et grave tacere est, regendi rectores et qui docendi sunt doctores nec erubescunt videri nec metuunt. Ducatum animarum impudenter adsumunt, quibus via omnis ignota ductoris est et quo vel ipsi gradiantur ignari sunt. Quod quam pravum quamve sit temerarium, seculari etiam ordine et disciplina monstratur. Nam dum dux exercitus non nisi labore et sollicitudine expertus eligitur, quales animarum duces esse debeant, qui episcopatus culmen immatura cupiunt festinatione conscendere, huius saltem rei comparatione considerent et adgredi repente inexpertos labores abstineant, ne caeca honoris ambitio et ipsis in poena sit et

Gregory's proposal was met with determined opposition. The court had no intention of curtailing its own privileges and emoluments; the bishops were, many of them, simoniacal themselves, and were also offended with Gregory on account of the distinction conferred on Syagrius. The metropolitans would do nothing. Virgilius of Arles was a weak person, on whom no dependence could be placed; Aetherius of Lyons was jealous of the see of Autun; Desiderius of Vienne was alienated because Gregory had refused him the privilege conceded to Syagrius. Syagrius himself was much too good a courtier to press any measure which was distasteful to the queen. Moreover, both Syagrius and Cyriacus, on whom Gregory principally relied, shortly afterwards died. Hence the great reformation was put off with plausible excuses, and throughout the year 600 nothing was done to remedy the evils.

Though greatly disheartened by the failure of his project, Gregory did not yet give up all hope. In 601 he made another effort. Once more he tried to procure the interest of Queen Brunichildis. "How many good gifts have been bestowed on you by the bounty of God," he wrote,[1] "and how completely the goodness of heavenly grace has filled your heart, is clearly shown to all men by your many meritorious deeds, and also by the fact that you rule the savage hearts of the Gentiles with skill and prudence, and—what is still more to your praise—that you add to royal power the ornament of wisdom. I have, therefore, great confidence that you will correct abuses. Do God's work, and He will do yours. Order a synod to be summoned, and among other things put down by conciliar decree the sin of

aliis pestifera erroris semina iaciat, quippe qui non didicere quod doceant." Compare *Epp.* ix. 218: "Quidam desiderio honoris inflati defunctis episcopis tonsorantur et fiunt repente ex laicis sacerdotes atque inverecunde religiosi propositi ducatum arripiunt, qui nec esse adhuc milites didicerunt. Quid putamus, quid isti subiectis praestaturi sunt, qui, antequam discipulatus limen attingant, tenere locum magisterii non formidant? Qua de re necesse est, ut, etsi quamvis inculpati quisque sit meriti, ante tamen per distinctos ordines ecclesiasticis exerceatur officiis. Videat quod imitetur, discat quod doceat, informetur quod teneat, ut postea non debeat errare, qui eligitur viam errantibus demonstrare. Ordinate ergo ad ordines accedendum est; nam casum appetit, qui ad summa loci fastigia postpositis gradibus per abrupta quaerit ascensum."

[1] *Epp.* xi. 49. Gregory offered to send a special envoy from Rome to hold an inquiry and punish guilty persons (*ibid.* xi. 46).

simony in your kingdom. Believe me, I have learnt by long experience that money which has been sinfully acquired is never profitably spent. If, then, you do not wish to be deprived of anything unjustly, be very careful to acquire nothing unjustly. If you wish to prevail over hostile nations, if you are eager to conquer them by God's help, receive with reverential awe the precepts of Almighty God, that He may deign to fight for you against your adversaries, according as He has promised in His Holy Scripture, *The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.*" A similar appeal was addressed to the kings Theodoric and Theudebert, to Virgilius of Arles, Aetherius of Lyons, and Aregius of Gap.[1] To Virgilius, who professed to be free of the taint of simony, Gregory dwelt with force upon the evil effects of avarice which "the Scripture calls idolatry." "The fierce lust for gain enslaves the heart, it prescribes what is evil and persuades us it is good, with one and the same sword it slays both the giver and the receiver. What place henceforth will be safe from avarice, when evil priests admit it even into the Church of God? For shame! The hand is polluted by unlawful gain, and the priest fancies that he can elevate others by his benediction, when he is himself laid low by his own iniquity, and enslaved by his own self-seeking. Even now at last, my brother, do what you can to repair the mischief you have caused by not correcting offenders, keep all whom you can from this wickedness, exert yourself to secure the assembling of a synod utterly to root out this heresy, so that you yourself may be rewarded by God, and all men may refrain from that which, by God's grace, shall have been condemned by common consent."[2]

On this occasion, Gregory, for the first time, sent a letter to Chlotochar, king of Neustria, thanking him for his kindness to Augustine, recommending Mellitus, and urging him to convene a synod for the suppression of simony.[3] Gregory's motive in writing to Chlotochar at this juncture is not quite clear. Possibly he thought that it was a good opportunity for establishing relations with the Neustrian court, since Chlotochar, having been grievously defeated by Theodoric and Theudebert at Dormelles on the Orvane, had been compelled to patch up

[1] *Epp.* xi. 47, 50, 38, 40, 42.
[2] *Ibid.* xi. 38.
[3] *Ibid.* xi. 51.

a peace with the neighbouring kingdoms.[1] Possibly also he realized that the power of Brunichildis was on the wane—she had been expelled from Austrasia in 599, and obliged to take refuge in Burgundy[2]—and therefore he was less careful of offending her by communicating with her enemy. Possibly he was beginning to despair of effecting anything with the bishops of the east and south, and hoped to find the bishops of Neustria more amenable. At any rate, the Pope made overtures of friendship to King Chlotochar. I may add that this last exhortation about the synod seems to have met with some slight response. A council was held in 601 to remedy the abuses complained of, and another in 603 or 604. But the synods do not appear to have been of much importance.

There can be no doubt that Gregory failed in his efforts to bring about a reformation of abuses. The country was not yet ready for anything of that sort. Political confusion had bred moral disorder, and amid the general disorganization Gregory's attempts to enforce the observance of law were inevitably futile. It took nearly two hundred years for the Gallican Church to recover from the effects of the invasion of the Franks. Nevertheless, Gregory's work in Gaul was not in vain. He succeeded in establishing a regular intercourse between himself and the Church of Gaul, especially in the cities of the east and south; he fixed a tradition of friendship between the Apostolic See and the Frank princes; he held up an ideal of Christianity before a savage and half-pagan people; and he caused the name of bishop to be once more reverenced in a land where it had grown to be almost synonymous with avarice, lawlessness, and corrupt ambition. If Gregory did no more than this, he accomplished enough. Though his work was not rich in definite results at the moment, yet afterwards, in the age of Charlemagne, its effects became manifest.

It should be observed that Gregory endeavoured to bring about the ecclesiastical changes he desired by allying himself closely with the Frank kings, and fortifying himself with their authority. In Gaul the Church and State were most intimately connected, and Gregory made no attempt to sever the bond. He did nothing which can be in any way construed into an attempt to establish a Roman or Papal party in opposition to

[1] Fredegar. *Chron.* 20. [2] *Ibid.* 19.

the court. On the contrary, he recognized to the full the royal prerogatives in regard to the Church, *e.g.* the right of convening synods, approving decrees, suppressing ecclesiastical abuses, and the like. Only against the usurped privilege of nominating lay courtiers to wealthy bishoprics did he protest, and even then in his denunciations he laid the emphasis almost entirely on the lay condition of the nominee, passing over in silence the illegality of the nomination itself. Gregory, in short, was prepared, as far as possible, to recognize the existing state of things. He frankly accepted the standing relations between the Frank kings and the Church, and only endeavoured, by admonition, by flattery, by every means he could think of, to turn the royal authority to the best account, and through it to influence the bishops in the right direction.

Gregory's aim, then, was to use the court as an instrument for the reformation of the Church. It is necessary to keep this aim in view, if we are to pass a fair criticism on the tone of the Pope's letters to Brunichildis. The flattery which Gregory offers to this terrible woman, surpassed only by Fredegundis of her contemporaries in the number and monstrosity of her crimes, has not unreasonably been objected to.[1] But the difficulty of explaining the tone of this correspondence

[1] See the following passages:—*Epp.* vi. 5: "Excellentiae vestrae praedicandam ac Deo placitam bonitatem et gubernacula regni testatur et educatio filii manifestat. Cui non solum incolumem rerum temporalium gloriam provida sollicitudine conservastis, verum etiam aeternae vitae praemia providistis, dum mentem ipsius in radicem verae fidei materna, ut decuit, et laudabili institutione plantastis. . . . Multarum rerum experimenta nos ammonent de excellentiae vestrae christianitate confidere." *Ibid.* viii. 4: "Quanta in omnipotentis Dei timore excellentiae vestrae mens soliditate firmata sit, inter alia bona, quae agitis, etiam in sacerdotum eius laudabiliter dilectione monstratis; et magna nobis fit de christianitate vestra laetitia, quoniam, quos venerantes ut famulos re vera Christi diligitis, augere honoribus studetis." *Ibid.* ix. 212: "Cum in regni regimine virtus iustitia et potestas egeat aequitate nec ad hoc alterum sine altero possit sufficere, quanto in vobis amore horum curae praefulgeant, ex hoc utique patenter ostenditur, dum turbas gentium laudabiliter gubernatis. Quis ergo haec considerans de excellentiae vestrae bonitate diffideat, aut de impetratione sit dubius, quando illa a vobis, quae subiectis vos libenter posse novit impendere, duxerit postulanda?" *Ibid.* ix. 213: "Excellentiae vestrae sollicitudo regia est ubique gubernatione laudabilis." *Ibid.* xi. 48: "Gratias omnipotenti Deo referimus, qui inter caetera pietatis suae dona, quae excellentiae vestrae largitus est, ita vos amore christianae religionis implevit, ut quicquid ad animarum lucrum, quicquid ad propagationem fidei pertinere cognoscitis, devota mente et pio

is much less serious than in the case of the famous letters to Phocas, to which I shall refer hereafter. It has been justly pointed out that the worst crimes of Brunichildis—even supposing, what is by no means certain, that she has not been maligned by historians—were committed after the death of Gregory. Further, though her private character left much to be desired, there can be no doubt that Brunichildis was a great queen, with whose enlightened and far-reaching aims the Roman Pope would necessarily have been in sympathy. An admirer of Roman culture, a patroness of the arts, a builder of churches, a maker of roads, a restorer of monuments, one who devoted her life to the attempt to impose on a half-savage nation the form and government of the Roman Empire,—Brunichildis may well have appeared the hope and mainstay of Frankish civilization and religion. It must, moreover, be remembered that the queen was a good Catholic, and in her way even pious. She patronized bishops, and was not unwilling to reform her clergy, when she could do so without endangering the royal prerogatives; at Autun she built a nunnery and hospital, and the Church of St. Martin; and she had laid Gregory himself under an obligation by the assistance she had afforded to the English mission. The good deeds of Brunichildis would be more likely to come under Gregory's notice than the evil, and doubtless the Pope, gratified by her continued support of religion and orthodoxy, was unwilling to lend an ear to tales of her political delinquencies, or of the moral shortcomings of her private life. Besides all this, we must take into account the custom of the period, in accordance with which people of rank were commonly addressed in language of exaggerated compliment, which somewhat grates upon our modern ears.[1]

operari studio non cessetis." *Ibid.* xi. 49: "Quanta in vobis bona divino munere sint collata, quantaque vos supernae gratia pietatis implevit, inter cetera vestrorum testimonia meritorum illud etiam patenter cunctis insinuat, quia et effera corda gentilium providi gubernatis arte consilii et regiam, quod maioris adhuc laudis est, ornatis sapientia potestatem. Et quoniam, sicut multis in utroque gentibus imminetis, ita quoque eas fidei sinceritate praecellitis, magnam de vobis in emendandis inlicitis fiduciam capimus." Such are the praises which the Pope bestows on her whom Fredegarius frankly calls a "second Jezebel" (*Chron.* 36).

[1] It is scarcely fair to Gregory to compare his praises with the servile and disingenuous flatteries which Venantius Fortunatus lavished alike on Brunichildis and on her mortal enemy, the atrocious Fredegundis.

While giving full weight to these considerations, however, I cannot but think that such explanations are scarcely sufficient by themselves to account for the tone of Gregory's correspondence. It is almost incredible that he was entirely ignorant of the queen's crimes and vices, or that he really believed her character to be as admirable as that, say, of his favourite Theudelinda. He seems rather to have thought that this was a case in which flattery would be politic; that a few judicious compliments would be well laid out if they won for the Church in Gaul such a powerful friend and defender. The letters to Phocas show that Gregory was capable of honouring with eulogistic phrases persons far less deserving of respect than Brunichildis; and, as has been pointed out by a recent biographer, his "whole conduct furnishes proof enough that he invariably acted on the principle enunciated by St. Francis of Sales when he said that more flies were caught by a spoonful of honey than by a whole barrel of vinegar."[1] It appears to me, then, that Gregory in this case purposely shut his eyes to the faults of his royal friend, and purposely made the most of her good qualities, for the sake of gaining her support in the prosecution of his projects for the Church in Gaul. Doubtless the means employed were the best adapted for achieving what he wished. The means themselves may cause us a little disgust. But when we remember the condition of the Frankish Church and kingdoms, and recollect the enormous influence for good and evil wielded by Brunichildis, we should perhaps be hypercritical if we blamed the Pope's diplomacy too harshly.

Finally, in Gregory's dealings with the princes of the Franks we look in vain for any trace of a political motive. He seems to have had no desire to make use of them either against the Lombards or against the Empire. There is nothing whatever in his correspondence to justify the idea that his relations with the court were determined by any political design. Not a single action of his can be reasonably pointed out as giving colour to such an hypothesis. Gregory was no schemer. His sole object in all his negotiations was the reformation of the Church in Gaul and the establishment of the rule of righteousness. His motive throughout was that of the Christian bishop and not that of the temporal prince. It was the Church, and not the Court, that he

[1] H. K. Mann *Lives of the Popes* vol. i. p. 96.

cared about. To attribute to him any deep-laid projects of a political character is to misinterpret utterly the principles and the character of the man.

I have thus far given some account of Gregory's endeavours to reform and purify the Gallican Church as a whole. It may be well to supplement this with a short notice of his dealings with individual bishops. First, then, Desiderius, the learned and virtuous bishop of Vienne—whose literary studies, condemned by Gregory, have been referred to in an earlier chapter of this work[1]—applied to the Pope for the pallium, pleading the ancient privileges of his Church. Gregory, however, who had made no difficulty about conferring the distinction on the influential courtier Syagrius, shrank from thus honouring Desiderius, who was bitterly hated by Queen Brunichildis. For the Bishop of Vienne had played towards the queen the part of John the Baptist, and boldly denounced her incestuous marriage with Merovech; for which cause he was persecuted by her with implacable resentment.[2] Hence the request of this worthy but unpopular man placed Gregory in an awkward position. He did not like to refuse outright, and yet he dared not, by complying, risk the loss of the queen's good will. He got out of the difficulty by professing a desire to confer the pallium on Desiderius, if only a precedent for the proceeding could be produced. He alleged, however, that no record of such a favour could be discovered among the documents in the Papal archives. Desiderius was accordingly told to institute a more thorough search among the records of his Church, and if he found any documents relating to this privilege, he was to forward them to Rome. Obviously this was only a polite way of refusing the bishop's petition. Desiderius, excellent man though he was, was not one whom it was expedient to honour.[3]

A similar refusal was sent to Aetherius, archbishop of Lyons, who pressed Gregory to renew certain ancient privileges of his Church. "We have caused a search to be made in our archives," wrote the Pope,[4] "but nothing has been found. Send us,

[1] Vol. I. p. 287.

[2] Fredegar. *Chron.* 24, 32; Ado *Passio S. Desiderii* (Migne *P. L.* cxxiii. p. 435 *sqq.*); *Acta Sanctorum*, May v. p. 251.

[3] *Epp.* ix. 220.

[4] *Ibid.* xi. 40. The privilegia demanded by Aetherius are not specified, but it is likely that they included the right of wearing the pallium.

therefore, the documents which you say that you possess, that we may learn what we ought to grant you." Aetherius was more influential than Desiderius, and Gregory did his utmost to soften his refusal by lavish praise of the bishop's "venerable gravity," his "great love of ecclesiastical order," his "delight in discipline," his "zeal in the observance of righteous ordinances," and his "promptitude in amending the lives of his clergy." But he remained firm on the main point. He was determined that these privileges should not become too common. They were to be the exception, not the rule; and they were to be conferred with a view to some substantial advantage to be derived therefrom. Doubtless, from a worldly point of view, Gregory's policy was right. Nevertheless, one cannot help regretting that worthy men like Desiderius and Aetherius should have been rejected, while courtiers of the type of Virgilius and Syagrius were loaded with honour.

Gregory, however, did not always refuse petitions. Aregius, bishop of Gap, visited the Pope in Rome, and seems to have succeeded in winning his regard. To him and his archdeacon was granted the privilege of using dalmatics.[1]

To Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, Gregory wrote a memorable letter, concerning the religious use and significance of images or pictures in churches. It seems that Serenus, scandalized at the superstitious honour accorded to these pictures by the people of his diocese, had caused them to be destroyed. This act of iconoclasm horrified the Pope, who sent the bishop a reproof, pointing out that pictures were "the books of the unlearned."[2]

[1] *Epp.* ix. 219. "Dalmaticae talares erant, sericae, albae, auro ornatae, et clavis seu plagulis ex purpura assutis distinctae" (Migne). For the privilege of wearing dalmaticae, see above, Vol. I. p. 263, *n.* 1.

[2] *Epp.* ix. 208: "Idcirco pictura in ecclesiis adhibetur, ut hi qui litteras nesciunt saltem in parietibus videndo legant, quae legere in codicibus non valent." Compare Baeda *Opp.* viii. 336, 337: "Cum horum aspectus saepe multum compunctionis soleat praestare contuentibus, et eis quoque, qui litteras ignorant, quasi vivam Dominicae historiae pandere lectionem." A remarkable passage, interpolated into one of Gregory's letters (*Epp.* ix. 147) in the latter half of the eighth century, is perhaps worth quoting: "Imaginis eius quam nobis tibi dirigendam per Dulcidium diaconum tuum rogasti, valde nobis tua postulatio placuit, quia illum in corde tota intentione quaeris, cuius imaginem prae oculis habere desideras, ut visio corporalis cotidiana reddat exortum, et dum picturam vides, ad illum animo inardescas, cuius imaginem videre desideras. Ab re non facimus si per visibilia invisibilia demonstramus. Sic homo qui alium ardenter videre desiderat aut sponsam amando desiderat,

Serenus, however, believed, or affected to believe, that the Pope's letter was a forgery, and continued the work of destruction. Then Gregory wrote a second time, blaming him severely, and setting forth at considerable length his own views about the matter.[1]

"We have been informed that, inflamed with inconsiderate zeal, you have broken the images of the saints, alleging as your excuse that they ought not to be adored. And, indeed, we praise you heartily for forbidding men to adore them, but we blame you for breaking them. It is one thing to adore a picture, it is another thing to learn through a picture, as through a narrative, what ought to be adored. For what the written book conveys to those who read it, that also the painting conveys to the uninstructed folk who contemplate it. Through it the ignorant learn what they ought to do, through it they read, though they have never learned their letters. Therefore painting, especially with the Gentiles, takes the place of reading. And you, who live among the Gentiles, ought to bear this carefully in mind, and not to scandalize and anger them by your unwise zeal. You had no right to break the pictures in the churches. They were placed there, not to be adored, but only to instruct the minds of the ignorant. It is with good reason that antiquity has permitted the histories of the saints to be painted in holy places; and if your zeal had been seasoned with discretion, you would undoubtedly have gained the good at which you aimed, and, instead of scattering a united flock, you would have brought the scattered flock together, and so would have deserved pre-eminently the name of shepherd, and would not have been reproached as a divider. But, as it is, we are informed that, by recklessly following your own impulses in this matter, you have so scandalized your people that the majority of them have

qui videre conatur, si contingit ad balneum ire aut ad ecclesiam, praecedere festine viam tendentibus praeparat, ut de visione hilaris recedat. Scimus quia tu imaginem Salvatoris nostri ideo non petis, ut quasi Deum colas, sed ob recordationem filii Dei in eius amore recalescas, cuius imaginem videre desideras. Et nos quidem non quasi ante divinitatem ante ipsam prosternimur, sed illum adoramus quem per imaginem aut natum aut passum vel in throno sedentem recordamur. Et dum nos ipsa pictura quasi scriptura ad memoriam filium Dei reducimus, animum nostrum aut de resurrectione laetificat aut de passione emulcat."

[1] *Epp.* xi. 10.

withdrawn from your communion. And how will you bring the stray sheep to Christ's fold, when you cannot keep within it those whom you already have? I therefore exhort you, strive even now to be careful, refrain from all presumption, endeavour with all your strength and all your zeal to win back by fatherly kindness the hearts you have alienated. Call together the scattered children of your Church, and prove to them, by the testimony of Holy Writ, that nothing made with hands ought to be adored, for it is written: *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.* Then tell them that the reason why you ordered the destruction of the pictures was that you were angered at seeing that adoration was offered to them, whereas they were intended for the edification of the unlearned, that those who could not read might learn from the paintings events that had happened. Say to them, 'If you wish to have pictures in the church to give the instruction which from ancient times they have been designed to give, I am perfectly willing to have them made and placed in the church.' Make it clear to them that you were not offended by the sight of the pictured story, but by the adoration which was wrongfully offered to the picture itself. Soothe them with these words, and so win back their affection. And if any one wishes to make pictures, do not forbid it, but in every way forbid the adoration of the pictures. Exhort your people earnestly to acquire the fervour of compunction by gazing on these pictured scenes of history, while they humbly bow in adoration before the Holy and Almighty Trinity, and That alone."[1]

[1] A remarkable story of a picture in a church is related by Greg. Tur. *Mirac.* i. 23: "Est apud Narbonensem urbem in ecclesia seniore . . . pictura quae Dominum nostrum quasi praecinctum linteo indicat crucifixum. Quae pictura dum assidue cerneretur a populis, apparuit cuidam Basileo presbytero per visum persona terribilis dicens: Omnes vos obtecti estis variis indumentis, et me iugiter nudum aspicitis. Vade quantocius, cooperi me vestimento. Et presbyter non intelligens visionem, data die nequaquam ex ea re memoratus est. Rursumque apparuit ei; sed et illud parvipendit. Post tertium autem diem secundae visionis, gravibus excruciato eo verberibus, ait: Nonne dixeram tibi ut operires me vestimento, ne cernerer nudus; et nihil ex hoc a te actum est? Vade, inquit, et tege linteo picturam illam, in qua crucifixus appareo, ne tibi velox superveniat interitus. At ille commotus et valde metuens, narravit ea episcopo, qui protinus iussit desuper velum expandi et sic obtecta nunc pictura suspicitur. Nam et si parumper detegatur ad contemplandum, mox demisso velo contegitur, ne detecta cernatur." On this story the editors remark: "Exinde fortasse consuetudo manavit ut Christus Dominus in cruce

An appeal was made by Gregory to the Frank court on behalf of the Bishop of Turin. In consequence of the war between the Franks and Lombards, some territory had been detached from the diocese of Turin and formed under Guntram into the new see of Maurienne, subject to the Franks. Gregory was anxious that the new bishopric should be abolished, and that the Frank territory should continue as before under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Turin.[1] But such an arrangement was clearly impracticable. At a time when the secular power of bishops was so great, and when civil and ecclesiastical arrangements were so closely connected, the Frank kings could scarcely be expected to agree that their own people should be committed to a bishop who was a subject of the Lombards. They might reasonably anticipate that districts placed under the authority of the Bishop of Turin in ecclesiastical matters, would in time be claimed by the Duke of Turin as part of his own dominions. Gregory's remonstrance, accordingly, was productive of no effect, and the diocese of Maurienne continued to be a thorn in the side of the Lombard prelate.

Gregory's influence on the development of monasticism will be fully dealt with in a subsequent chapter. In the present place, however, it is convenient to speak briefly of the state of the monastic institutions in Gaul at this time, and of Gregory's relation to them. A word must also be said on the work of Gregory's contemporary Columban and his letter to the Pope.

It seems that in the sixth century the enthusiasm for the monastic life had to some extent died down in Gaul. The beginnings of that movement had been brilliant enough. Great

pendens vestitus depingeretur" (Migne *P. L.* lxxi. p. 725). The Council of Elvira had forbidden pictures in churches: "ne quod colitur et adoratur in parietibus depingatur" (c. 36). But in the beginning of the fifth century the practice had been defended by Paulinus of Nola, who also had executed in his new church a series of frescoes, which he describes (*Poem.* xxvii.). In the sixth century the custom of decorating churches in this way had become common. Gregory of Tours mentions several instances: *Hist. Franc.* ii. 17; vii. 22; *De Glor. Confess.* 62; *Vitae Patr.* 12 § 2 (iconicas apostolorum); *Mirac.* i. 22: "Per credulitatem integram tanto Christus amore diligitur ut . . . eius imaginem ad commemorationem virtutis in tabulis visibilibus pictam per ecclesias ac domos affigant (populi)." Gregory tells a story of such a picture being pierced with a dagger by a Jew, whereupon blood flowed from the wound. He also relates a very singular tale in connexion with a picture of the Mother and Child in Constantinople (*Mirac.* i. 10).

[1] *Epp.* ix. 214, 226.

men, fired with the zeal for asceticism, had carried the people along with them, and planted congregations of monks throughout the length and breadth of the country. St. Martin of Tours founded, half a league from his episcopal town, the celebrated house of Marmoutier; Germanus of Auxerre founded a monastery bearing his name; John Cassian established at Marseilles, over the burying-place of a martyred Roman legionary, the famous Abbey of St. Victor; in the east, on the hills of Jura, Romanus founded Condat, which with its daughter-houses became at once renowned for its austerities, and later took rank as one of the greatest schools in Gaul; in the south, Honoratus took possession of the island of Lerins, once "a hideous desert swarming with serpents," and converted it by the labours of his monks into "a paradise, rich in streams, covered with flowers, and sweet with odours." Other founders, more or less distinguished, had planted other settlements, and by the sixth century Gaul had become full of monasteries. But the life of the monks themselves had grown stagnant. The great coenobites had passed away, and none to be compared with them came to take their place.

For the decadence of Gallic monasticism several causes may be assigned. In the first place, the system lacked unity and solidarity. The monasteries were independent of one another, each constituting a little world in itself, and in consequence the greatest diversity in life and discipline prevailed. Almost every house was governed by a different Rule. Cassian, Caesarius and others drew up regulations for particular monasteries; elsewhere the Rule of Basil was adopted; sometimes a constitution was patched together from these and other Eastern Rules which bore the names of Anthony, Macarius, and Pachomius; sometimes there was no written Rule at all, but the conventual discipline was determined solely by the will of the abbat. Hence, in the absence of any final and universal authority, monastic life in Gaul tended to be confused, ill-regulated, and unstable. Again, the monasticism which had been imported into Gaul from the East had not yet become adapted to the conditions of Western life. It was not yet acclimatized, and had not learnt how to accommodate itself to its environment. The austerities of Eastern monachism, though mitigated in some cases, were imitated as closely as circumstances would

permit, and the asceticism of the saints of the Thebaid was the goal of the strivings of Western devotees. The extreme rigour characteristic of the East was certainly practised with success by a few self-torturing fanatics, with whom we are made acquainted by Gregory of Tours. For instance, Julian, a presbyter in the monastery of Randan, in Auvergne, maintained continually an upright position until his feet became diseased[1]; Caluppa, an anchoret in the same district, led a solitary existence in a cave on the top of an isolated rock, permitting no one to approach him[2]; Senoch, near Tours, remained for many years in a tiny cell, loaded with chains, and barefoot even in winter[3]; Hospitius of Provence was likewise chained[4]; Lupicinus carried continually on his shoulders a huge stone which two men could scarcely lift, and would not permit himself to sleep[5]; Portian tortured himself by chewing salt on hot summer days, denying himself water[6]; Wulfilaich on his pillar in Trier gave Gaul a Western counterpart of St. Simeon of Antioch.[7] But though a few monks and anchorets lived up to the Eastern standard of asceticism, the majority of religious found the ideal too high for them, and, in despair of attaining to it, became careless and lax. Monachism in Gaul was not yet harmonized with the character and genius of the people; it was still a foreign growth, alien to the soil into which it had been transplanted, and as such necessarily sickly. Once more, during the early part of the sixth century much jealousy and rivalry had been engendered between the monks and the bishops. While the monks aimed at emancipating themselves from episcopal control, the bishops were determined to abate nothing of their authority. Many councils passed decrees in favour of the bishops against the monks. It was enacted, for instance, that no new monasteries might be founded without the bishop's consent[8]; that the abbats should be subject to their diocesan bishop, and should meet him when convoked at least once a year[9]; that no abbat should travel any distance from his monastery without the bishop's permission[10]; that the discipline

[1] Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* iv. 32.
[2] Greg. Tur. *Vit. Patr.* 11.
[3] Greg. Tur. *Vit. Patr.* 15.
[4] Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* vi. 6.
[5] Greg. Tur. *Vit. Patr.* 13.
[6] Greg. Tur. *Vit. Patr.* 5.
[7] Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* viii. 15.
[8] Council of Agde, 506, c. 58.
[9] Council of Orleans, 511, c. 19; and 533, c. 21.
[10] Council of Arles, 554, c. 3.

of the monks should be under the supervision of the bishop[1]; that no monk should retire to a hermitage without the bishop's leave.[2] It is true that the Frank kings were inclined to favour the convents which they founded, and took pains to protect them from wrongful encroachments. But for the most part the monasteries were subjected to the tyranny of the bishops, whose interests were generally antagonistic to their own. And this was inevitably a source of weakness. Lastly, the lawlessness of the age, which had infected every class of society in Gaul, had penetrated within the cloister. Discipline had decayed, and many a monastery had become little better than a hot-bed of vice and crime.[3] For the accomplishment of the work which monasticism had to do in the land of the Franks—the revival of learning, the conversion of the heathen, the protection of the weak, the reproof of wickedness and violence—there was needed a new organization and a fresh and vigorous impulse.

With the older foundations in Gaul Gregory had but little communication. To the monastery of Lerins, however, he sent two friendly letters. This celebrated school of learning, which had once been the seminary of Gaulish bishops, and was still haunted by the memories of many famous men of the preceding century, had declined alike in power and reputation. Discipline was lax, and the abbat Stephen was reported to be remiss. Augustine, however, who visited the abbey on his way to England, had sent to Gregory a favourable account of Stephen and his monks; and the abbat himself had strengthened the good impression thus produced by making the Pope a present of some spoons and plates. In return Gregory sent a short letter of acknowledgment, praising Stephen's "vigilance," and exhorting him to be yet more earnest in his care of the souls committed to his charge.[4] Later, however, Gregory changed his opinion of Stephen, as we learn from a letter of admonition written to his successor, Conon. The epistle may be quoted as a fair specimen of the advice which Gregory gave in such cases,

[1] Council of Arles, 554, c. 2, 5.

[2] Council of Orleans, 511, c. 22.

[3] See, *e.g.*, the scandal at the nunnery of Sainte Croix at Poitiers (Greg. Tur. *H. F.* ix. 39, 40; x. 15).

[4] *Epp.* vi. 54.

and as an illustration of Gregory's view of the qualities which ought to be looked for in a good abbat.[1]

"How skilful you are in governing the brethren, and how zealous in watching over them, we have learnt from our brother and fellow-bishop Mennas. As we were often grieved by hearing of your predecessor's unwise remissness, so we are now rejoiced by your carefulness and foresight; for we are sure that your zealous watchfulness will conduce to your own reward, and will also serve as a useful example to others. But since our adversary, when he sees that every side is well guarded against him, tries to break in by some secret entrance, and endeavours to crush his opponents by craft, let your vigilance be kindled with a care that is ever more fervent; let every spot be completely defended by God's help, that the fierce wolf prowling round may find no means of entering the sheepfold of the Lord. Let it be your earnest endeavour, with the help of the Redeemer, to restrain and thoroughly guard those who are entrusted to your care from gluttony, from pride, from avarice, from vain talking and from all impurity; that, in proportion as your subjects have, through your vigilance, been victorious over the adversary, you may win the greater reward for the government committed to you. Let the good feel that you are kind, the evil that you know how to apply correction. And, in correcting them, be careful to observe the rule of loving the men themselves even while you are severe upon their faults. If you disregard this, the correction will be cruelty, and you will destroy those whom you wish to improve. You ought to cut away what is diseased without ulcerating the sound part of the limb, for by pressing too hard upon the knife, you only injure the person whom you are anxious to benefit. Your kindness, then, must be marked by caution, not by laxity; your punishments must be inspired, not by severity, but by love. Let the one quality be so seasoned by the other, that the good monks, while they love you, may have something to fear, and the evil, while they fear you, may have something to love. Attend carefully to these precepts, my beloved son, observe them zealously; let your mode of government be such that you may render back to God in safety those who have been entrusted to you, and that you may be deemed worthy in the day of the

[1] *Epp.* xi. 9.

eternal recompense to hear Him say, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*"

Although monastic discipline had deteriorated, there was no falling off in the number of monasteries founded, or in the liberality with which they were endowed. A letter of Gregory's supplies us with an instance in point. Dinamius the Patrician, who had once administered the Papal estates at Marseilles, after he had been removed from his governorship by Childebert, retired into private life with his sister Aureliana, devoting himself to the study of Scripture and to the discharge of religious duties. Among other good works, the brother and sister built, or at least enlarged, a nunnery at Marseilles, named after St. Cassian,[1] and they petitioned Gregory to grant it certain privileges, with a view to defining the relations of the nuns to the bishop of the diocese. With this request the Pope gladly complied, and drew up for the benefit of the nunnery the following regulations.[2] When the abbess died, no stranger, *i.e.* no one not a member of the congregation, might be appointed her successor; the nuns were to choose one of their own number, who, if considered fit for the office, was to be constituted by the bishop. Neither the bishop nor any of his clergy were to meddle at all with the property, or the administration of the monastery, which was committed wholly to the abbess.[3] The bishop was to celebrate mass in the nunnery twice a year—on the anniversary of its

[1] In the sixth century there were at Marseilles four monasteries—that of St. Victor, of St. Mary, of St. Saviour, and of St. Cassian. The first was a monastery of monks, the other three were occupied by congregations of nuns. Cassian himself founded the first two houses, without the walls of the town; the third was afterwards erected inside the city; the last was either built or restored by Dinamius and Aureliana about 595–6.

[2] *Epp.* vii. 12.

[3] Yet, though the management and disposal of the property of the nunnery rested with the abbess, it was not Gregory's wish that the nuns should transact their business in person. He administered a sharp rebuke to a bishop who neglected to arrange "ut quidam de clero probati viri curam gerentes earum se necessitatibus adhiberent"; and ordered him to appoint without delay, "unum probatum vita moribusque, cuius aetas atque locus nihil de se pravae suspicionis obiiciat, qui sic monasteriis ipsis cum Dei timore possit assistere, quatenus eis pro quibuslibet causis privatis et publicis extra venerabilia loca contra regulam vagare non liceat" (*Epp.* iv. 9).

dedication and on the festival of St. Cassian.[1] On these occasions—and on these only—his chair, the symbol of episcopal authority and jurisdiction, might be placed in the oratory, though it was to be removed so soon as the celebration was over. At other times mass was to be said by a priest nominated by the bishop. But though the powers of the bishop were thus limited, Gregory directed that he should still, "in the fear of God," exercise a watchful supervision over both the nuns and the abbess, so that, if any faults were committed, he might correct them with canonical discipline.[2]

It is noticeable that in this case, as always, Gregory took the side of the religious against the bishops, and aimed at depriving the latter of all authority within the monasteries, except so much as was involved in the right to exercise canonical discipline against offenders. This was also the usual policy of the kings. When they founded monasteries, they often endeavoured to protect them by granting them charters of privilege, which were sent to Rome to be confirmed and approved by the Pope. Thus, for example, about the year 550, King Childebert the First, "for the good of his soul," founded a monastery at Arles, and, to secure the maintenance of the arrangements he had made for it, he wrote to Pope Vigilius, requesting that these regulations might be confirmed by the Apostolic authority, "knowing," so Gregory tells us, "that such great reverence is paid by the faithful to the Apostolic See, that what has been established by its decree can never be disturbed by any unlawful usurpation."[3] It seems, however, that in this instance the rights secured to the monastery were not respected by the Archbishop of Arles, and the monks sent to Rome to complain of the aggression. Hence, "although what has once been enacted by the authority of the Apostolic See needs no further confirmation," yet Gregory consented to ratify the decrees of

[1] "Die natalis vel dedicationis monasterii." Cf. *Epp.* xi. 56: "die dedicationis vel natalicii sanctorum martyrum quorum illic reliquiae ponuntur."

[2] "Erga vitam actusque ancillarum Dei sive abbatissae . . . episcopum secundum Dei timorem sollicitudinem statuimus adhibere, ut, si aliquam de illic habitantibus exigente culpa oportuerit ultioni summitti, ipse iuxta sacrorum canonum vigorem modis omnibus debeat vindicare."

[3] *Epp.* ix. 216: "Sciens quippe eam apostolicae sedi reverentiam a fidelibus exhiberi, ut quae eius fuissent decreto disposita, nullius deinceps inlicitae usurpationis molestia quaterentur."

Vigilius by his own authority, and to send a copy of them to the archbishop, directing him in future to protect the monks from all molestation.[1]

Particularly remarkable are three charters issued by Gregory at the request of Queen Brunichildis in 602. These documents have been held by many to be forgeries, or, at any rate, interpolated; but the MS. authority is strongly in favour of their genuineness, and on this ground Mabillon, Hartmann, and other critics believe them to be of Gregorian authorship.[2] The contents of the letters are almost identical, and refer to three foundations of Brunichildis in the city of Autun—a hospital, a church attached to a monastery, and a nunnery. Over each of the first two institutions an abbat presided; over the last, an abbess. It seems that Brunichildis, like Childebert, desired to protect her foundations by charters. She made known her wishes in this respect to Gregory, and the Pope, in accordance with her instructions, had the three documents drawn up, which, for their greater security, he requested might be deposited in the public archives. In these charters he ordained that no king, bishop, or other dignitary should abstract or divert any of the property belonging to the above-mentioned institutions; that, on the death of the abbat or abbess, a successor should be appointed by the king,[3] with the consent of the monks, nuns, or clerics resident in the institution; that no king, bishop, or other, whether in person or by proxy, should accept money for the ordination of the abbat or abbess so appointed; that no abbat or abbess should be deprived or deposed, unless convicted of crime before the bishop of Autun sitting with six episcopal assessors. In the charter of the hospital two further provisions were

[1] *Epp.* ix. 216.

[2] *Ibid.* xiii. 11, 12, 13. These privileges are alluded to by Gregory himself in a letter to Brunichildis. *Ibid.* xiii. 7: "Privilegia locis ipsis pro quiete et munitione illic degentium sicut voluistis indulsimus. . . . Sed ne fortasse ab eorum locorum praepositis eadem decreta nostra quoque tempore supprimantur, pro eo, quod eis quaedam interdicta esse noscuntur, haec eadem constitutio gestis est publicis inserenda, quatenus, sicut in nostris, ita quoque in regalibus scriniis teneatur." A reference to them is found in Flodoard. *Hist. Rhemens.* iii. 27 ("Sicut beatus Gregorius de quodam monasterio a quadam regina aedificato ipsa petente dictaverat," etc.).

[3] "Quem rex eiusdem provinciae cum consensu monachorum . . . elegerit." As Hartmann notes, "rex provinciae" is not an expression which would have been used by a forger of the eighth or ninth century.

added, viz. that no abbat should undertake the office of a bishop (unless he first resigned his abbey), and that no monk should be promoted to any ecclesiastical office without the consent of the abbat. All the three charters conclude as follows: "All these provisions of our precept and decree we ordain to be observed in perpetuity for thee and all who succeed thee in the same rank and place, and for all others concerned. But if any one, whether king, priest, judge, or secular person, being aware of this our written constitution, should attempt to contravene it, let him be deprived of the dignity of his power and station, and know that he is guilty before the judgment-seat of God for the wrong which he has done. And unless he restores what he has wickedly abstracted, or does suitable penance for his unlawful acts, let him be cut off from the most sacred Body and Blood of our God and Lord, the Redeemer Jesus Christ, and be subjected to severe punishment in the eternal judgment. But the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be on all who observe what is right in respect of this place; may they receive here the fruit of their well-doing, and find the rewards of eternal peace at the hands of the severe Judge."

The freedom with which Gregory here issued decrees which were binding upon kings, is certainly surprising. But this ceases to be a difficulty if we recollect that he was acting on the instructions of Brunichildis, who would have no hesitation in tying down her successors. Doubtless the queen forwarded to Rome a rough draft of the charter, which the Pope did little more than put into correct form. The concluding imprecation, which some have thought to be a later addition, was doubtless suggested by the queen's anxiety to bind those who came after her.[1] But it is going too far to say, as Montalembert does, that in these charters "the direct subordination of temporal power to spiritual" was already "clearly set forth and recognized." We know from Gregory's dealings with the Emperor and other princes, and from the tone and contents of his letters to such, that this was by no means the case.

While Gregory was thus giving charters to monasteries to

[1] Somewhat similar penalties and imprecations are to be found among the acts and canons of Gallican councils about this period. See Council of Orleans A.D. 541, c. 25; of Paris A.D. 557, c. 1; of Tours A.D. 567, c. 24; of Valence A.D. 584.

protect them from enemies without, the great Irishman Columban was busily carrying forward a reformation movement from within. A Leinster man, born about 543,[1] and educated first in the school of St. Sinell, on one of the islands of Lough Erne, and afterwards at the great monastery of Bangor on Belfast Lough, Columban had been seized with an overmastering impulse to go forth from his native land and preach the gospel.[2] Accompanied by twelve companions, he crossed over to Britain, whence, after a short stay, he passed into Gaul,[3] and arrived at the court of King Sigibert of Austrasia at some date before the year 575. He was then in the prime of life, handsome, eloquent, and learned in both classical and theological literature. Coming from a land of monks and scholars, he was inferior to none in his devotion to asceticism and in his love of learning. It is no wonder that he made a deep impression on the barbarous Frank. "Do not leave us," said the king to him, "to visit other nations. Remain, and we will provide you with everything you wish." "I desire no riches," Columban replied. "I only wish to follow, so far as human frailty will permit, the injunction of my Lord: *If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.*" Then the king said, "If your wish is to bear the cross of Christ and to follow Him, seek out the solitude of a hermitage, but leave not our dominions. Go not to another nation, but stay here and win for yourself a higher reward, while you aid us in securing our salvation."[4]

In what was then "the vast wilderness" of the Vosges, Columban founded his first monastery among the ruins of the Roman village of Anagratis. Like most of the monastic founders, he and his companions led for a time a life of extreme privation. Before the land could be brought into

[1] Columban died in 615, and in his poem to Fedolius he says he has completed his seventy-second year. Hence he cannot have been born later than 543.

[2] Jonas *Vita Columb.* 9.

[3] *Ibid.* 10, 11. "At that time" says Jonas, "either because of the numerous enemies from without, or on account of the carelessness of the bishops, the Christian faith had almost departed from that country. The creed alone remained. But the saving grace of penance and the longing to root out the lusts of the flesh were to be found only in a few."

[4] *Ibid.* 12.

cultivation, and when the offerings of the country people failed them, they had often nothing to eat save the leaves and bark of trees, grass, wild herbs, and bilberries.[1] Soon, however, the fame of the saint spread through the surrounding district, and disciples gathered round him in such numbers that it became necessary to seek a place where a larger monastery might be built. About eight miles from Anagratis, within the dominions of Guntram of Burgundy, stood the ruins of another Roman town, Luxovium or Luxeuil. The land here, once populous and well cultivated, was now overgrown with dense woods, the haunt of bears and wolves. Some traces of the old civilization, however, yet remained. Among the tangled mass of scrub and forest trees there were fragments of walls, ruins of the baths, with their hot springs still flowing, and many a statue of forgotten gods and goddesses, which, to the fancy of the monks, suggested the wicked presence of unseen demons, lurking within that gloomy wilderness. Here, then, by the desolate baths which had once been the glory of the Roman town, Columban laid the foundation of the celebrated monastery of Luxeuil. In a little while a third community was settled close by at Fontaines.[2]

The discipline in these monasteries was exceedingly severe. "You must fast every day," said Columban to his neophytes,[3] "you must pray every day, work every day, read every day." "A monk," he continued, "must live under the rule of one Father and in the society of many brethren, that he may learn humility from one, patience from another, silence from a third, gentleness from a fourth. He is not to do what he likes. He is to eat what he is told to eat, he is to have only what is given him, he must do the work which is set him, he must be subject to those whom he dislikes. He must go to bed so tired that he will fall asleep on the way, and he must rise before he has had as much sleep as he wants. When he is ill-treated he must be silent. He must fear the prior of his monastery as a master, and yet love him as a father; he must believe that whatever orders he gives him are good. He must not discuss the decisions of his superiors, for it is his duty to obey."[4] The punishments for even the slightest offences were

[1] Jonas *Vita Columb.* 13, 14, 16.
[2] *Ibid.* 17.
[3] Columb. *Reg. Coenob.* 3.
[4] *Ibid.* 9 (paragraph *de perfectione monachi*).

drastic, and usually took the form of stripes. Thus, for example, six stripes were inflicted on a monk who coughed when beginning a Psalm, on a priest who neglected to pare his nails before celebrating mass, on a deacon who omitted to trim his beard, or who smiled during the service, or who struck his teeth against the Communion chalice. Twelve stripes fell on the back of the monk who forgot to say a prayer when he began or ended any work, or who ate without asking a blessing, or who ran or jumped unnecessarily. Thirty stripes were his penalty if he did not say Amen at the end of the prayers; fifty, if he came into the monastery with his head covered, or if he told a falsehood unintentionally, or if he was late for prayers; a hundred, if he ventured to do anything without the authority of his superiors, or if he engaged in a dispute; two hundred, if he spoke familiarly and alone with any woman.[1] These punishments seem to us extraordinarily severe, but it appears that a beating more or less was thought little of in the days of Columban. This much, at least, we gather from the fact that the recitation of fifteen Psalms—an exercise which could have lasted less than an hour—was considered a penalty equivalent to thirty stripes, and two days' diet on bread and water might be substituted for two hundred stripes. Evidently the monks were accustomed to the lash, and preferred to be flogged rather than have their scanty allowance of food cut down.

In spite of the severity of the Rule, the community of Columban rapidly increased both in reputation and in numbers. It was not merely the weak and poor and oppressed who flocked to Luxeuil to escape the hardships of their lot. The sons of the great Frank and Burgundian nobles were eager candidates for admission. They shore off their long locks, fared like serfs on bread, vegetables, and water, toiled at menial work, felling the trees, ploughing the fields, and reaping the corn, and carried out with implicit obedience the despotic commands of a foreigner. The sixth century, whatever its faults, was not an age of compromise. When men were once convinced of the expediency of adopting a religious life, they flung themselves into their new profession with the same vehemence and something, at least, of the same hardness by which the secular life was characterized.

[1] Columb. *Reg. Coenob.* 10.

Columban himself had occupation enough in the government of his monks. He did not, however, neglect his studies. His delight in classical literature, particularly the poets, was unquenchable, and he did not disdain himself, in his spare moments, to trifle in verse. He composed also sermons and instructions in a prose which, though somewhat grandiose and florid, was nevertheless grammatically correct, and bore evidence of an intimate acquaintance with the classical models.[1] On Sundays and holy-days, when his ordinary labours were suspended, he liked to wander from the precincts of the monastery into the depths of the surrounding forest, and there in solitude give himself to prayer and contemplation. The love of nature and of animals, characteristic of another great Irish saint, Columba, was strong in Columban, and it was said that, when he approached, even the wild things of the woods would lay aside their fear of man and recognize him as their friend. The birds flew down at his call to be caressed, the squirrels dropped from the boughs upon his shoulders and nestled in his scapular,[2] even bears abandoned their ferocity and did his bidding.[3] Once when he was wandering in the woods, meditating whether it were worse to fall a prey to wild beasts or to evil men, he suddenly found himself surrounded by a dozen wolves. He stood still and cried aloud, "O Lord! make haste to help me!" The savage creatures came close and snuffed at his garments, but did him no harm. As he returned to the monastery he fancied that he heard the voices of Suevic robbers, calling to one another in the forest, but he saw no one, and could not tell whether the sounds were real or a device of the devil to prove his constancy.[4]

The popularity of Columban among the people had its drawbacks, for it brought upon him the bitter enmity of the clergy. The ignorant, simoniacal priests of Gaul were violently jealous of one who, both intellectually and morally, was incomparably their superior. They determined to crush the intruder. Had his work in Gaul turned out a failure, they might, perhaps, have borne with him, but to stand by calmly and witness his triumphs was more than they could do. Unfortunately, that miserable question about the correct time for

[1] The *Instructiones* and the *Carmina* are edited in Migne's *Patrol. Lat.* lxxx.
[2] Jonas *Vita Columb.* 30. [3] *Ibid.* 15, 27. [4] *Ibid.* 15.

celebrating the Easter festival furnished them with a handle against him. When the fourteenth day of the Paschal moon happened to be a Sunday, Columban, in accordance with the Celtic custom, kept it as Easter, while the clergy of Gaul, following the usage of Rome and Alexandria, put off the celebration of that festival until the 21st. Thus, in the year 593, and again in 597, the neighbouring clergy learnt with indignation that, while they were fasting in preparation for the solemn observance of the Saviour's Passion and Death, the foreign monk was keeping festival, as though Christ were already risen.[1] Even had there been no jealousy or unfriendliness between the bishops and Columban, such a divergence of custom could scarcely have failed to produce discord. In the sixth century, when every point of ritual was held to be symbolical of some religious truth, an exaggerated importance was attached even to the minutest details, and men were prone to imagine that unorthodox customs were scarcely less heinous than unorthodox beliefs. Hence the practice of Columban aroused the greatest resentment in Gaul, and the bishops were furnished with a specious pretext for molesting their rival. Unused though they were to assembling in councils, they held a synod in 603, probably at Chalon-sur-Saône, to discuss the schismatical observance at Luxeuil. Columban did not attend in person to defend himself. However, he sent to the bishops a characteristic letter, in which, while vindicating at some length the usage of the "Churches of the whole West," he pleaded that at all events each party should be permitted to retain the customs they had inherited from their fathers. "I am not,"[2] he wrote, "the author of this difference. I came to these lands a poor stranger, for the love of Christ the Saviour, our common Lord and God. And by that same Lord I pray you to suffer me to dwell in the silence of these woods, at peace and in charity with you all; let me live near the bones of my seventeen departed brethren, where I have been allowed to dwell among you these twelve years, that I may continue to

[1] Compare Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 25: "Unde nonnunquam contigisse fertur illis temporibus, ut bis in anno uno pascha celebraretur, et cum rex pascha dominicum solutis ieiuniis faceret, tum regina cum suis persistens adhuc in ieiunio diem palmarum celebraret." On the Easter question, see below, p. 141, and references there given.

[2] Columban. *Epp.* 2 (ed. Gundlach).

pray for you, even as I have ever done and ought to do. I implore you to let us dwell together here on earth, since we shall dwell together in heaven, if we be found worthy to enter there. I do not venture to appear before you in person, lest perchance I should be provoked to disobey the Apostle's injunction: *Contend not in words.* And I would not that there should be strife betwixt us, lest our enemies, the Jews and heretics and pagan Gentiles, should triumph in our discords. But if it be God's will that you should drive me from this desert place to which I came from beyond the seas for the love of my Lord Christ Jesus, it will be mine to say with the Prophet Jonah: *If for my sake this great tempest is upon you, take me up and cast me forth into the sea, so shall the sea be calm unto you.* Yet it will be your duty first to follow the example of those heathen sailors, who strove to save the prophet from destruction and to bring the ship to land. Finally, my fathers, pray for me, even as I, though unworthy, pray for you. Think not of me as a stranger. For, whether we are Gauls, or Britons, or Irish, or of any other nation, we are all members of the same Body. Therefore let us all rejoice together in the unity of the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, let us all strive alike *to come unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* In Him let us love one another, let us praise one another, let us do good to one another, let us visit one another, let us pray for one another, that with Him we may reign and rejoice with one another. I pray you, my most patient and holy fathers and brothers, pardon the garrulity and presumption of one whose task is beyond his powers."

Several years before this, at some date between 595 and 600, Columban had written a letter on the Paschal question to Pope Gregory.[1] The Irish monk had read with delight Gregory's *Pastoral Care,* and knew how anxious the Pope was to put down the simony and immorality so rampant in Gaul. Finding in Gregory's views so much with which he could heartily sympathize, he ventured to lay before him a statement of his own opinions on the Easter question, in the hope, if not of converting the Pope, yet of proving to him that the Celtic usage was not without solid justification. The dedication of his long and rather tedious letter is remarkable.

[1] Columban. *Epp.* 1.

"To the holy Lord and Father in Christ, the Roman, the fairest ornament of the Church, the most august flower, so to speak, of the whole of this withering Europe, the noble overseer, to him who possesses the gift of speculating on Divine causality, I, Bar-Jonah, a poor dove in Christ, send greeting."

The arguments which Columban put forward as the most important were two. First, there was the authority of Anatolius, whose calculations had been adopted by the Irish, and whose learning had been praised by Jerome. If the Pope rejected the authority of Anatolius, he must also reject that of Jerome. "And I tell you candidly," wrote the monk, "that whoever denies the authority of Jerome will be accounted a heretic and contemptuously rejected by the Churches of the West, for in everything that regards the Scriptures they believe implicitly in Jerome."[1] Secondly, Easter, being the festival of light, should be celebrated on a night during the greater part of which the moon is shining. But if the celebration was deferred till the twenty-first or twenty-second day, when the moon entered upon her last quarter, darkness would preponderate over light, and the victory of Satan over Christ rather than of Christ over Satan would be symbolized. "They who say that Easter can be celebrated at that age of the moon cannot confirm their assertion by the authority of Scripture; nay, they are incurring the charge of sacrilege, of contumacy, they are endangering their own souls."

After a long discussion, in the course of which he indignantly repelled the charge of judaizing, Columban commended his arguments to Gregory's serious consideration, and then proceeded to ask his advice respecting the manner in which he ought to deal with the simoniacal and adulterous bishops of Gaul, and with monks who, from the desire of the more perfect life, quit their monasteries and retire to hermitages against the will of their abbat. He expressed his regret that bodily weakness and the care of his brethren prevented his visiting Rome, as he often longed to do, and he begged the Pope to send him the lectures on Ezekiel, which he had heard highly praised, and

[1] "Simpliciter enim ego tibi confiteor, quod contra sancti Hieronymi auctoritatem veniens apud occidentis ecclesias haereticus seu respuendus erit, quicunque ille fuerit: illi enim per omnia indubitatam in scripturis divinis accommodant fidem."

the concluding part of his exposition of the Song of Solomon. He also urged him to explain the hidden meaning of Zechariah, and thereby earn the gratitude of "Western blindness." Finally, returning to the Easter question, he concluded his letter with these words: "Your holy son Candidus tells me that you will probably reply to me that what has been confirmed by ancient usage cannot be changed. Well, error is manifestly ancient, but truth which reproves it is ever more ancient still."

The Pope never replied to this letter.[1] Possibly it never reached him; possibly he was offended at its independent tone. For though Columban was profuse in his compliments and expressions of deference, he showed very clearly that he had no intention of accepting any Papal decision as a final settlement of the question, unless, indeed, it happened to coincide with the opinions he had formed himself. He told Gregory plainly that if he set aside the authority of St. Jerome, he would be regarded as heretical, and at the same time he urged him not to follow blindly the decisions of previous Popes, and particularly of St. Leo. "A living dog is better than a dead Lion," he quoted, playing upon Leo's name. "A living saint may correct the omissions of one who went before him." Certainly Columban knew nothing of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility.[2]

[1] The author of the *Vita S. Salabergae abbatissae Laudunensis* says that Gregory "ad praefatum patrem (Columbanum) melliflua remisisse scripta" (Migne *P. L.* lxxx. p.206). But Columban, in his letter to Boniface (*Epp.* 5), says that Satan "once and again" hindered the bearers of his letters to Pope Gregory; and no allusion to Columban occurs in Gregory's correspondence.

[2] The attitude of Columban towards the Papacy is very interesting, inasmuch as it probably represented the attitude of the whole of the Celtic Church. It may be further illustrated from a letter written between the years 612–615 to Pope Boniface the Fourth (Columban. *Epp.* 5). Columban, at the time of writing, had been driven from Gaul, and was living at Bobbio, the last monastery which he founded, in a retired gorge of the Appennines, about twenty-five miles from Piacenza. Between him and the Lombard queen Theudelinda a warm friendship had sprung up. He zealously co-operated with her in converting the Arians, and he also shared her sentiments respecting the controversy of the Three Chapters. It seems that the Catholics at the Lombard court, including, perhaps, the queen herself, were under the impression that the Popes, by accepting the Fifth Council, had involved themselves in the heresy of "Eutyches, Nestorius, and Dioscorus." Therefore, at Agilulf's request, Columban wrote to beg the Pope to summon a council and purge himself from all suspicion. The terms of his letter are remarkable at once for exaggerated deference and for sturdy independence. Rome to the writer is

But to return to Columban's controversy with the bishops. It appears that the Irishman's appeal was not made wholly

"the head of all the Churches in the world, saving the special prerogative of the place of the Lord's resurrection," it is "the principal seat of the orthodox faith," and in it "the column of the Church stands firm." The Pope again is the head of all the Churches of Europe, the Pastor of pastors, the chief of the generals of the army of God. To the chair of St. Peter the Irish are especially bound, and however great and glorious Rome itself might be, it is only St. Peter's chair which makes it great and glorious to them. Over all other nations the prodigious fame of that great city had been spread abroad, but the Irish had never heard of it, until the chariot of the Church came rolling to them across the sea, guided by Christ Himself, and drawn by those swift coursers St. Peter and St. Paul, with whose cherished relics Rome was blessed. "We are the disciples of St. Peter and St. Paul and of all the saints who by the inspiration of the Spirit wrote the Holy Scriptures; we Irish, who dwell at the end of the world, receive nothing but the doctrine of the Evangelists and Apostles. There has never been a heretic, a Jew, or a schismatic among us. We preserve unchanged the Catholic Faith as it was first delivered to us by you, the successors of the Holy Apostles." Still, with all his professions of respect for the Apostolic See, and with many apologies for his own ignorance and presumption, Columban wrote sharply, as one who had a right to rebuke neglect and error even in a Pope; "for," says he, "it is not the person, but reason, which prevails." He beseeches the Pope to summon a council, and publicly "to clear the chair of Peter from every error, if indeed, as men say, any error has been admitted into it." "There is good cause for mourning and weeping," he adds, "if the Catholic Faith is not preserved in the Apostolic See." Pope Vigilius is accused of having received heretics into his communion at the Fifth Council. "If," says Columban, "you know that Vigilius died with such a stain upon his soul, why do you notwithstanding this recite his name at mass? Everything which is not of faith is sin. It is your fault if you have departed from the true belief, and have made the first faith of none effect. Your inferiors are therefore in the right when they resist you, they are in the right when they withdraw from your communion. . . . As your honour is great from the dignity of your see, so you need the greater care lest you lose that dignity through transgression. You will retain your power only so long as your judgment is just. For he is truly the keeper of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, who, informed with the knowledge of the truth, opens to those who are worthy and shuts against the unworthy. And if he acts otherwise, he will be unable to open or shut at all. Every one knows that our Saviour gave the keys to St. Peter, and you perhaps on account of this claim for yourself a certain arrogant authority and power, more than that of other men, in matters of religion. But be assured that if such a thought ever enters your mind, your power with God will be diminished, for unity of faith has produced unity of power and privilege throughout the world. It was the truth of his confession which gave the privilege to the holy Key-bearer, the religious superior of us all."

It is clear that Columban regarded the See of Rome with very great respect as the chief of all Christian sees, the See of the Prince of the Apostles, and the source from which the gospel had come to his own country. But it is equally clear that he believed it to be possible for a Pope to fall away from the faith,

in vain. The rivalry and discord between him and the Gallican prelates did not certainly disappear; but for some years longer he was left in his beloved solitude of the Vosges, to pray by the tombs of his brethren that were dead, and to stimulate the activities of the living. Columban, however, was not made, like Benedict, for a life of complete seclusion. His sphere was action. He often wandered away from his monastery, and wherever he went he denounced in scathing words whatever he deemed to be wrong, even in the life of persons of the highest rank. He was as one of the Old Testament prophets, impelled by an irresistible force within him to declare the judgments of God against unrighteousness. His reproofs were vigorous, inspired by a noble indignation against sin, but his vehemence was too often unseasoned with discretion. "Would it not be better," said a Frank noble to him once, "to give men milk to drink instead of wormwood?"[1] Thus, while many admired his fervour, and believed in his mission, some were offended, and murmured against the foreign upstart with his exacting demands and his entire want of reverence for sinners in high place.

They would have murmured in vain, however, had not Columban had the worldly imprudence to give mortal offence to Brunichildis. The old queen, who resided at the court of her grandson Theodoric of Burgundy, fearing a rival, did all she could to discourage the young king from contracting a lawful marriage, and kept him amused with a succession of attractive concubines. Columban earnestly endeavoured to counteract the queen's influence in this matter, and often reproved Theodoric for his immorality, urging him to take a lawful wife. On one occasion, when he was paying a visit to the royal villa of Bourcheresse, Brunichildis had the audacity to lead into his presence some of the natural children of the king. "What would these children with me?" asked the monk. "They are the king's sons," Brunichildis answered. "Strengthen them

and that he considered it right in such a case that the faithful should protest and demand a synod in which the matter might be investigated and judged. It is needless to remark that such opinions would not be likely to win acceptance in Rome. Columban, with his heterodox views on the Paschal question, the Three Chapters, and the infallible authority of the Pope, was a saint of a type which found but little favour in the Lateran.

[1] Jonas *Vita Columb.* 43.

with your blessing." "Nay," said Columban, "they shall never sit upon the throne, for they are the offspring of sin." Brunichildis was awed for the moment, but she did not forgive the insult, and from that time the bishops and nobles who hated Columban could count on her support.[1] Theodoric, indeed, who, with all his faults, was good-natured enough and had a genuine respect for his saintly monitor, refused for a time to be a party to any persecution of him. But at last assiduous slander prejudiced even the king, and Columban was compelled to quit Luxeuil, and retire in custody to Besançon.[2]

The saint was now under arrest, but the vigilance of his guards was lax. One Sunday, finding no one at hand to hinder, he quietly walked away from Besançon and returned to Luxeuil.[3] But this flagrant defiance of the king's authority sealed his fate. A band of soldiers was immediately sent to expel him from the kingdom. They found him in the chapel, chanting the service in the midst of his monks. "Man of God," said they, "we pray you to obey the mandate of the king, and return whence you came." But the saint refused. "I left my country," he replied, "for the service of Jesus Christ, and I cannot believe that my Creator wills me to return."[4] At last, however, he suffered himself to be persuaded by his monks, and, taking with him his Irish companions, he followed the soldiers to Nevers, whence he was conveyed down the Loire to Nantes.[5] Here he was put aboard a merchant vessel bound for Ireland. But Columban was not destined ever to see his native land again. The ship on which he had embarked, after putting out to sea, was driven back to the mouth of the Loire, and the captain, believing that his misadventure was occasioned by the presence of the saint, put him ashore with his companions, and sailed away upon his voyage.[6]

The subsequent adventures of Columban—how he visited Chlotochar and was kindly received; how he travelled up the Rhine to Bregenz; how after lingering awhile on the shores of Lake Constance, he painfully crossed the Gotthard and presented himself at the court of the Lombard Agilulf; how he disputed against the Arians; how he founded the monastery of Bobbio,

[1] Jonas *Vita Columb.* 31, 32; Fredegarius *Chron.* 36.
[2] Jonas *Vita Columb.* 34.
[3] *Ibid.* 35.
[4] *Ibid.* 36.
[5] *Ibid.* 37–46.
[6] *Ibid.* 47.

where through centuries of barbarism the ancient learning was kept alive and the classical masterpieces were cherished; how at the last the brave old man, finding the discipline of his monastery insufficiently austere, retired to a solitary cave beyond the Trebbia, where he spent in prayer and fasting the remaining days of his life, until he was called away on the 21st of November 615;—all this cannot be recounted here. My concern is only with Columban's monastic work in Gaul. This continued long after the saint himself had been driven from the country. Not only in Burgundy, but throughout the whole of Gaul, Luxeuil come to be regarded as the metropolis of Gallican monasticism, the most eminent as well as the most severe of all the religious houses in the country. "Numbers come from all quarters," says a writer of the seventh century,[1] "fathers with their sons, eager for instruction, longing above all things to be found worthy of admission to the congregation, after a long and patient endurance of severities designed for their probation. And now what place, what city, does not rejoice in having for its ruler a bishop or an abbat trained in the discipline of that holy man Columban? For it is certain that, by the virtue of his authority, almost the whole of the land of the Franks has been for the first time properly furnished with regular institutions." Before many years had passed a multitude of new monasteries had been founded in Burgundy, Austrasia, and Neustria, some directly as colonies from Luxeuil, some by men who had either been trained themselves in the discipline of Columban, or who believed in that discipline as a training for others. And from these new institutions a reforming influence spread among the older monasteries, calling back to life the old enthusiasm and zeal, till, as another seventh-century writer says,[2] "there were, by the blessing of God, innumerable monasteries of both sexes throughout the whole of France and Gaul flourishing under a regular discipline." Yet, though the spirit of Columban worked so strongly in the land, it was not his Rule which was destined to give to the monasteries the organization they required. That was to come to them from another quarter—from Italy and from Benedict.[3]

[1] *Vita S. Bercharii.*

[2] *Vita S. Eligii.*

[3] The commencement in Gaul of the Benedictine movement is involved in

Of Gregory's work in Gaul no more need be said. The relations which he succeeded in establishing with her kings were not sustained after his death. For more than a century there appears to have been no intercourse between the Popes and the Frank rulers; at any rate, till the time of Gregory the Second no documents exist which can be quoted in proof of any intercommunication. Rome left the Merovingian princes to their fate. Yet, though communications between Gaul and Rome practically ceased with Gregory, the work of the great Pope was not thrown away. Gregory had given an ideal to a Church which was rapidly degenerating into lawlessness and heathenism. He had brought Christian influences to bear on a people whose ferocious crimes had made them a by-word throughout Europe. He had made both bishops and princes feel the moral power of Rome. And finally, he had defended the monks against the tyranny of the bishops, and "made the Papal curse their bulwark against royal oppression." In this last respect, at any rate, his influence was perpetuated through the century of silence that followed his death. It was the monasteries chiefly that undertook the work of christianizing and civilizing the barbarian Franks; and the monasteries had been strengthened for their task by the protection of Pope Gregory. He shaped the instrument which was to destroy the remains of paganism in Gaul.

much obscurity, and the documents relating to it cannot be relied upon. It was commonly believed that, the year before Benedict's death, Maurus the best-beloved of his disciples was sent to Gaul, with a copy of the Rule and the weights and measures regulating the daily supply of bread and wine which the monks were to receive; that he settled in the oak forests near the Loire, a short distance below Tours, and there built the monastery afterwards known by his own name (Mabillon *AA. SS. O.S.B.* saec. i. p. 274). This legend may be true, though it is certainly odd that Gregory of Tours says not a word either of Maurus or of the Rule of Benedict. Whether true or not, however, there is no indication that the Benedictine Rule was adopted in other monasteries in Gaul for nearly a hundred years. But after the teaching of Columban had infused a fresh vigour into the monastic life, the need was felt of an organization at once more definite, more flexible, and more comprehensive than any yet received. And such a system was discovered in the famous Rule drawn up by the monk of Monte Cassino, and sanctioned in the fullest extent by the authority of the monk-Pope, Gregory the Great. It was adopted even by Luxeuil and its colonies—at first in conjunction with, and later as superseding, the Rule of their Irish founder; and at length, in the year 670, the Council of Autun recognized it as the supreme monastic code of laws which it was incumbent on all religious to obey (Labbe *Conc.* vi. p. 536).

CHAPTER VIII

GREGORY'S MISSIONARY LABOURS

THE renewal of friendly relations with Gaul afforded Gregory an opportunity, which he had long desired, of undertaking the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. Amid all his burdens and anxieties, it seems that the Pope had never forgotten the English slave-boys whom he had once seen in the Roman Forum. When Candidus went to Gaul in the autumn of 595 to take charge of the Papal estates, he was directed to lay out part of the rents in the purchase of English slaves, boys of seventeen or eighteen years of age, who were to be sent at once to Rome.[1] It was doubtless Gregory's intention that these lads, converted and educated under his own supervision, should one day be sent back to their own country as missionaries, or, at any rate, as interpreters in the service of Roman priests and monks; and he hoped to utilize their acquaintance with the language, customs, and religion of their country for the furtherance of his own design respecting its conversion. His plan was well conceived,[2] but it required time—three or four years at least—for its development, and Gregory had no time to lose. His health was very bad, and he knew that he might die before his scheme was ripe for execution. About 596, too, he was on friendly terms with the rulers of Gaul, and could secure for his missionaries a passage through that country, which a few years later might be closed against them. Further, in Britain itself conditions were favourable to the enterprise.

[1] *Epp.* vi. 10 (to be dated September 595).

[2] Mr. Plummer observes that Bede himself notices how "gentiles ab errore conversi, atque ad veritatem evangelii transformati, melius ipsos gentium errores noverant, et quo certius noverant, eo artificiosius hos expugnare atque evacuare didicerunt" (*Opp.* viii. 267, 268).

The position of affairs in that island was, briefly, as follows. About the middle of the fifth century three allied nations—the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes—had made good their footing in the country. The original habitat of these tribes was the region of Southern Jutland, Schleswig-Holstein, and the Lower Elbe. They were at once warriors and seamen, and for some time previously both Gaul and Britain had suffered from their piratical incursions. In appearance they were horrible—their faces ghastly with blue daubing, their long hair drawn back from the forehead, and over all, as Beowulf puts it, "the likeness of a boar, of divers colours, hardened in the fire, to keep the life in safety." Sidonius[1] has touched on some of their characteristics—their reckless courage, their delight in war, their barbarous cruelty; and he says that after an expedition they were accustomed to apply frightful tortures to one in every ten of their captives, deeming it "a religious duty to torment their prisoners rather than to put them to ransom." It is probable that, with the Angles and Saxons, there came to Britain a sprinkling from other Germanic peoples—Frisians, Franks, Lombards, and Danes. But these were but isolated bands of adventurers, neither numerous nor important.

Of the history of the conquests during the next hundred years we have no reliable account. Facts and events recorded in the Chronicles, the Welsh poems, and the histories of Gildas and Nennius can only be accepted with the greatest caution. As yet history and legend were imperfectly differentiated. Fragments of old romances, myths, and folk-tales are treated as veritable history, and the doings of the heroes of the invasion are confounded with the exploits of the gods of the race. Indubitable facts, indeed, there are, such as no sane critic would deny. Such, for example, are the destruction of Anderida, the battle of Badon Hill, and the foundation of Bamborough. But while we can yet discern the great landmarks of the invasion, it is impossible, on our present evidence, to follow the victorious armies step by step.

By the close of the sixth century, however, when Britain was on the eve of renewing communications with the Roman world, we begin to see more clearly. The bulk of the island was by this time won. But the work of conquest had been

[1] Sidon. Apoll. *Epp.* viii. 6.

attended with extreme difficulty. The wild nature of the country, with its great stretches of swamp and waste and forest, had interposed endless impediments in the path of the invaders. And the Britons used this advantage to the full. In Italy and Gaul the Roman civilization had enfeebled and enervated the native character, so that when the invaders came they found an easy prey. But in Britain it was not so. Rome had not had time seriously to impair the vigour of the people or to break their spirit. They made a magnificent resistance. Every rood of ground which the Saxons gained was won by desperate fighting. Every position was contested. And when, overmatched by the skill or numbers of the enemy, the Britons were forced to retreat, it was only to renew the struggle a little further back with unabated courage.

The conquest, though difficult, was thorough; and the Britons, if not exterminated on the conquered soil, were at least reduced to a condition of complete dependence and insignificance. About the year 596 a rough line might have been drawn down Central Britain, from Ettrick beyond the Cheviot to the Peak of Derbyshire, and thence, skirting the Forest of Arden and crossing the estuary of the Severn, through the woods of Dorset to the sea. Such a line would have marked the boundaries of two peoples, differing from one another in language, civilization, and religion, and bitterly hostile each to each. West of it, Britain belonged to Britons, still free and resisting; east of it, the English occupied undisturbed the country they had won.

The western half of Britain, still independent of the invader, included the region extending northward of the Dee, afterwards called Cumbria, the country of Wales, and the district of Cornwall, Devon, and part of Somerset. Within this area there was little political centralization. Gildas[1] (c. 540) tells us that it was governed by a multitude of petty "tyrants," some of whom he names, and of whose morals and manners he gives an appalling account. Amid this crowd of small princes some, indeed, appear to have exercised a predominant authority. Such, *e.g.*, were Constantine, king of Devon and Cornwall, and Maelgwn of North Wales, the most powerful of all. The northern states, too, between the Firth of Clyde and the

[1] Gildas *Epistola* (*Mon. Hist. Brit.* p. 16).

Derwent, were united in the kingdom of Strathclyde. Still, interests were, on the whole, divergent, and the Britons, though united against the foe, remained isolated in their relations with one another.

The remainder of Britain, east of the dividing line, may for practical purposes be separated into three divisions—Northumbria,[1] the land of the West Saxons,[2] and the district which owned the supremacy of Ethelbert. Here the principles of union and cohesion were already beginning to work. When the invaders landed in Britain they were in small groups, independent of one another; when they set about the work of conquest they still remained isolated, without collective armies or common action; even when they settled down to enjoy the

[1] Northumbria comprised the district situated between the Humber and the Firth of Forth. This country had formerly been distinguished into two realms—Deira, roughly corresponding to Yorkshire; and Bernicia, the land between the Tees—or, according to others, the Tyne—and the Forth. The beginning of the fusion of these kingdoms into the united province of Northumbria dates from the reign of King Aella, son of Yffi, whose name the abbat Gregory once found of good omen for the cause of Christianity. Aella, king of Deira from 559 to 588, established a supremacy over Bernicia. It was not done without a struggle, and it is probable that the slave-boys admired by Gregory in the Roman market were captives taken in one of the frays between the rival kingdoms. But, though Aella was eventually recognized as overlord, the fusion of the kingdoms was not completed until the time of his successor Aethelric the Bernician, of the line of Ida the Flame-bearer, who welded both together into the single realm of Northumbria. When Augustine landed at Ebbsfleet, Aethelric was dead, but Northumbria was governed by his still more powerful successor, Aethelfrith the Destroyer: Of him Bede writes that "he conquered more territory from the Britons (either reducing the natives to tribute or driving them clean out to make way for the Angles) than ever did king or tribune before him. To him might justly be applied the patriarch's blessing: *Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil*" (Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 34).

[2] The territory of the West Saxons was bounded, on the north by the Upper Ouse and the Wood of Arden, on the south by the English Channel; on the east the boundary line followed the borders of Middlesex, Kent, and Sussex. At the end of the sixth century the power of this kingdom was declining. King Ceawlin—described by William of Malmesbury as "the wonder of the English, the hatred of the Britons, and the destroyer of both"—was defeated in 591 by his own nephew, Ceolic, son of Cutha, in the battle of Wanborough, and died two years later. Ceolic then seized the kingdom and reigned till 597, when he was succeeded by his brother Ceolwulf. But the power of the West Saxons, which flourished under Ceawlin, was greatly broken, owing to internal struggles between the rival houses, as well as to the continual conflicts with "the Angles and Britons, and also the Picts and Scots."

land they had subdued, they still tended to arrange themselves in mutually antagonistic bands. But beneath this outward show of separation it is possible to trace the working of a deeper unity, binding together these scattered bodies, primarily in virtue of their common origin, and also, in a secondary degree, in virtue of their common warfare against a common foe. At the close of the sixth century this underlying unity was everywhere breaking through the crust of isolation. The bonds of blood and race were being tightened. The groups were being fused into masses.

Of the three divisions above referred to we are here concerned only with the last. This was a district in the south-east, extending roughly from the Humber to Sussex and the sea. It was split up into a number of small kingdoms, marking the settlements of various detachments of the conquerors. To the south was Sussex, the history of which at this time is quite obscure. In the centre were the states of the East Saxons, ruled by Saebert, nephew of Ethelbert; and the two East Anglian Folks governed by Redwald the Uffing. The northern kingdom of Mercia was not so constituted till the time of Penda, but was represented at this period by a number of petty states of which we know hardly anything except their names. But the most important of the kingdoms in this division was undoubtedly that of Kent. Its king, Ethelbert, was acknowledged by all the other provinces as, in some sort, their overlord. "He had," says Bede,[1] "the imperium over all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber, and the borders contiguous to the same." This supremacy was certainly somewhat loose. It was not constitutional or accurately defined, but was rather a *de facto* hegemony, of which the principal privilege was the right to lead the "subject" states in war, but it also carried with it a certain influence over their affairs in time of peace. As "Bretwalda," Ethelbert was able to afford peculiar facilities to Augustine for the prosecution of his mission.

In 596, then, Ethelbert of Kent was the most powerful ruler in the island, his supremacy extending over the various English and Saxon principalities from the Humber to the Channel. Some while before he had married a Christian princess from

[1] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 5.

Gaul, Bertha, daughter of Charibert, king of Paris.[1] At the time of her marriage it had been expressly stipulated that she should have full liberty to worship as a Christian, and should be attended to her new home by a Frank bishop named Liudhard.[2] The religion of the queen doubtless excited the curiosity of the English. But Liudhard seems to have been deficient in missionary zeal and was personally too insignificant a man to effect with Ethelbert what Remigius, aided by Bertha's ancestress Chlotilda, had done for Clovis.[3] From the Gallican Church, moreover, no help was forthcoming; and Gregory heard with sorrow that the English were longing for the knowledge of Christianity, but the bishops of the neighbouring country neglected their duty, and would do nothing to facilitate the good work.[4] He resolved, therefore, not to wait until the education of his English slave-boys was finished, but to attempt the conversion of England without delay.

In the spring of 596 the mission was ready to set out.[5] It is remarkable as the only great mission to the heathen organized and originated at Rome during this period, of which we have any account. "Gregory is the one Pope of that time who shows the old Roman yearning for new realms to subject to the rule and order of Rome." It is also remarkable for the fact that it was entirely composed of monks. It might have seemed that men whose object was to isolate themselves from the world, and whose time was to be given mainly to prayer and contemplation, were scarcely those most fit to be chosen for a long and dangerous journey, and for active work in a foreign land. But Gregory had experience of the monastery, and he knew

[1] Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* iv. 26; ix. 26.

[2] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 25. According to the Canterbury tradition, Liudhard was Bishop of Senlis.

[3] William of Malmesbury, i. 13, says that the good life of Liudhard "regem ad Christi cognitionem invitabat," and that this was the reason why Ethelbert yielded so easily to Augustine's teaching. So also Gocelin (*Vita Aug.* 20) calls Liudhard "apostolicorum legatorum praecursor aut ianitor." But Liudhard's influence seems here to be over-estimated.

[4] Greg. *Epp.* vi. 49, 57.

[5] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 23: "anno XIV. eiusdem principis" (Mauricii), *i.e.* August 595–August 596. Gregory's letter (*Epp.* vi. 50*a*) sent back with Augustine is dated July 23, 596. As the monks only got a little way, it is likely that they started in 596 rather than in the autumn of 595. A few months would leave time enough for their journey and Augustine's return: Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 33 even says that the missionaries determined to abandon the attempt "post dies aliquot."

that within the cloister walls more than anywhere else he might hope to find the qualities which were absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of so difficult a task—courage, patience, discipline, and self-devotion.

The head of the mission was Augustine, who held the office of prior in Gregory's monastery on the Caelian. He was a man of commanding presence and lofty stature, a head and shoulders taller than any of his companions.[1] He had been thoroughly trained in the monastic discipline, was well versed in the study of Scripture, and on his zeal and judgment the Pope believed he could rely. Of his early life, however, we know nothing except that he had once been a pupil of Felix bishop of Messina,[2] and that he was an intimate friend of Gregory himself.[3] For us Augustine's history begins on the day when, in company with some forty other monks—among them Laurentius the priest, Peter, Honorius, and John afterwards abbat of St. Augustine's Monastery at Canterbury—he passed through the Ostian Gate to become the Apostle of the English nation.

From Ostia, Augustine and his companions pursued their way by sea till they reached the island of Lerins, the most celebrated of the older monasteries in the West—the Holy Isle of Southern Gaul. In the early part of the fifth century, when the country had already become the prey of the barbarians, a Gallo-Roman of noble birth, named Honoratus, had fled to what was then a desolate spot, overgrown with brambles and shunned by travellers on account of the venomous snakes which were said to abound in its thickets. There, amid the ruins of a heathen temple, Honoratus laid the foundations of his monastery. By

[1] Gocelin *Vit. Aug.* 49. A certain old man whose grandfather had been baptized by Augustine, "intimabat a parentibus sibi insinuatam ipsius beati Augustini formam et personam patriciam, staturam proceram et arduam, adeo ut a scapulis populo superemineret. . . . Facies amabilis et reverenda, frons mediante coma suis columnis resultabat fenestrata. Signa vero et sanitates, quae in populo frequentantium coetuque debilium assiduabat, nullum enarrare nec enumerare posse astruebet."

[2] Even this is doubtful, since Gregory's letter to Felix of Messina (*Epp.* xiv. 17, in Migne's ed.) is marked by Jaffé as spurious. The phrase in the letter is "Augustino alumno tuo."

[3] Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 11. Leo III, in a letter to Kenulf, king of Mercia (Haddan and Stubbs *Councils* iii. p. 538), calls Augustine Gregory's "syncellus"—the sharer of his private room and confidential secretary.

the labours of his disciples the island and the adjacent shore were cultivated with such success, that in a few years the aspect of the place was entirely changed and the wilderness became a garden. No monastic home seems to have inspired its sons with such intense affection, and nowhere else did the charms of the monastic life awaken such enthusiasm. That quiet nook in the loveliest bay upon the southern coast of Gaul, with its magnificent views of wooded hills and snow-capped mountain peaks, blessed with a bright sky and a delightful climate, gorgeous with flowers and fragrant with their odours, earned and deserved the reputation of an earthly Paradise. Under the rule of Honoratus and his immediate successors, Lerins became the most celebrated school of theological learning in Europe. In that peaceful retreat Vincent of Lerins acquired the knowledge which made him the first controversialist of his age; there Salvian meditated his great vindication of God's providential government in the world; there Faustus, the founder of semi-Pelagianism, taught and studied; there Eucherius learned the delights of solitude which he has so glowingly described. From the cloisters of Lerins many of the chief cities of Gaul obtained the most eminent of their bishops—Hilary of Arles, celebrated for his austerities, his devoutness, his love of the poor, his apostolic labours; Lupus of Troyes, who by his resolute courage awed even the ferocious Attila; Caesarius of Arles, the most eloquent and effective preacher of his day. Even with Britain itself the history of the monastery was connected, for the two bishops Germanus and Lupus, who in the fifth century were sent to combat Pelagianism in our island, were both disciples of Lerins.

When Augustine and his followers reached this venerable place, the monastery was no longer what it had been. Nevertheless, the missionaries were entertained very hospitably by Abbat Stephen and his brethren, and they noticed with delight the peace and harmony which appeared to reign among the members of the happy community.[1] It was doubtless with heavy hearts that they turned away from that friendly resting-place to begin their perilous journey into the unknown land. After Lerins the course they pursued is doubtful, but it seems probable that they passed by way of Marseilles—where Aregius

[1] *Epp.* vi. 54.

the Burgundian governor received them kindly[1]—to Aix, where they were welcomed by Bishop Protasius.[2] Here, however, their courage failed them. The inhabitants of Gaul, who still remembered the horrors of the Saxon incursions, filled the missionaries' ears with dreadful tales about the nation, whose savage ferocity seems to have been reckoned their leading characteristic.[3] They told the trembling monks that the people to whom they were going were worse than wild beasts, that they preferred cruelty even to feasting, that they thirsted for the blood of men, that they utterly abhorred the Christian faith, and killed and tortured all who dared to preach it.[4] In addition to these harrowing rumours which in themselves were sufficient to alarm even the most intrepid, the missionaries were confronted by other difficulties of a practical character. Although they were worthy men, "who feared the Lord," they do not appear to have been selected for any peculiar personal qualifications for the work they undertook. They were utterly ignorant of the character and the customs of the people to whom they were sent, and, what was an even worse drawback, they could not speak a word of their language.[5] Further, by what seems to us an extraordinary oversight, no written instructions appear to have been given them, and no letters of commendation had been sent out to secure them a friendly reception even in Gaul. It is no wonder that the missionaries, thrown thus upon their own resources, and oppressed by the consciousness of their own inadequacy for the task allotted to them, lost heart and longed to return to the peace and security of their old home on the Caelian. It was unanimously agreed that their leader, who in the event of a successful issue to the mission was to have been consecrated bishop, should go back to Rome and use all his influence with Gregory to procure their recall.

Willingly or unwillingly,[6] Augustine yielded to the wishes of his brethren, and returned to Rome. When he arrived,

[1] *Epp.* vi. 56.

[2] *Ibid.* vi. 53.

[3] Salvian. *De Gubern. Dei* iv. 14: "Gens Saxonum fera est, Francorum infidelis, Gepidorum inhumana," etc. See also Sid. Apollin. *Epp.* viii. 6; Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 23: "barbaram, feram, incredulamque gentem." (Cf. Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 33.)

[4] Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 6.

[5] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 23. The missionaries' ignorance of the island is admitted by Laurentius, ap. Baed. ii. 4.

[6] Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 6 says: "reniti non valentem Augustinum."

however, he found the Pope immovable. Gregory would not permit the scheme to drop, nor would he accept the offer of resignation. Yet, in spite of the disappointment he must have felt, he was ready to sympathize with the terrors of the missionaries, and sent them by Augustine a very tender letter of encouragement[1]:—

"It is better not to begin a good work at all than to begin and turn back. My beloved sons, you have begun this work by the Lord's help, you must therefore bring it to completion. Be not deterred by the toil of the journey or the tongues of evil-speakers, but with all earnestness and fervour press on with what, by God's will, you have commenced, knowing that great toil is crowned by the greater glory of reward. We are sending back Augustine your prior, and we appoint him now your abbat. Obey him in all things, and be assured that whatever may be fulfilled in you through his admonition will be abundantly profitable to your souls. May Almighty God protect you by His grace, and grant me to see the fruit of your labour in the eternal fatherland; that so, though I cannot labour with you, I may yet share the joy of your reward—for indeed I desire to labour. God keep you safe, beloved sons!"

Gregory did more than send mere empty words of encouragement to his envoys. He set himself, as far as possible, to obviate the most pressing of their difficulties. To remedy their ignorance of the English language, he commanded them to take some Franks to act as interpreters.[2] To facilitate their passage through Gaul, he wrote a batch of letters to

[1] *Epp.* vi. 50*a*; Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 23. It is dated July 23, 596.

[2] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 25: "Acceperunt autem, praecipiente beato papa Gregorio, de gente Francorum interpretes." In his letter to the Frank kings (*Epp.* vi. 49), Gregory writes: "Quibus etiam iniunximus ut aliquos secum e vicino debeant presbyteros ducere, cum quibus eorum possint mentes agnoscere, et voluntates ammonitione sua . . . adiuvare" (cf. *Epp.* vi. 57). If these passages are to be taken together, they seem to show "that at this time there could not have been any great difference in speech between the English and Franks, for as these interpreters were priests, the suggestion that their knowledge of English was the result of commerce does not appear satisfactory" (W. Hunt *Hist of the Eng. Ch.* p. 20). So also William of Malmesbury says: "Naturalis . . . lingua Francorum communicat cum Anglis, quod de Germania gentes ambo germinaverint." But, on the other hand, the case of Agilbert (Baeda *H. E.* iii. 7) seems to prove that it was not so in Wessex. Perhaps, therefore, it is best to regard the "interpretes" of Bede, and the "presbyteros" of Gregory's letter, as distinct.

eminent persons whom they were likely to encounter on their route—to the boy-kings of Austrasia and Burgundy, to their powerful grandmother Brunichildis, to the bishops of Tours, Marseilles, Lyons, Arles, Vienne, Autun, and Aix, as well as to the governor Aregius, and the abbat Stephen.[1] Lastly, to ensure unanimity and discipline amongst the missionaries themselves, and to prevent any future weakness like that which had occasioned Augustine's return to Rome, he made Augustine abbat and gave him full authority over his companions.

Encouraged by the Pope's letter, and by the measures he had taken for their welfare, the missionaries now set forward in good earnest. Their way led them past places rich in historical associations. First they came to Arles, that "Gallula Roma" hallowed by memories of Hilary and Caesarius, and now in process of being adorned by Virgilius's new cathedral church; thence they turned northward up the Rhone valley, past Vienne, whose learned bishop was still giving public lectures on classical literature, to Lyons, the scene of early martyrdoms. From Lyons they pressed on to Chalon-sur-Saône, the residence of the youthful King of Burgundy, then to Autun, next to Tours, the famous bishop of which, Gregory the historian, had recently passed away. A legend reported by Gocelin takes them to Anjou.[2] At any rate, winter found them at Paris, where they were well received by Chlotochar, king of Neustria, and by the notorious Fredegundis, now not far from the peaceful end of her evil life. In the spring of 597, soon after Easter, they made ready to embark for England.

It was probably towards the end of April that Augustine and his company committed themselves to the flat-bottomed wooden boats which were to convey them to their destination. Unlike Germanus and Lupus, whom, in 429, envious demons are said to have opposed with wild storms,[3] they seem to have had a fair passage, and landed safely on the shore of Britain. "On the east coast of Kent," writes Bede,[4] "is the large island of Thanet, containing, according to the English reckoning, 600

[1] *Epp.* vi. 49–57. All the letters were written in July 596.

[2] Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 10 *sqq.*

[3] Adamnan. *Vita Columbae* ii. 34, and Reeves' note *in loc.*

[4] Baeda *H. E.* i. 25; Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 15. The old name for Thanet was Ruim, still preserved in the modern Ramsgate. For Isidore's derivation of the name Thanet, see *Mon. Hist. Brit.* I. cii. *b.*

hides, and separated from the mainland by (the Stour estuary, known as) the Wantsum." The gradual silting up of the soil has blocked this channel, but in Bede's time it stretched between the Roman towns of Reculver and Richborough, in width about three furlongs, and fordable only in two places.[1] At the mouth of this inlet a sandspit jutted out from Thanet into the waves, called originally "Ypwine's Fleet"—the more familiar Ebbsfleet. Here, about 450, the Jutes, under the legendary leadership of Hengist and Horsa, first landed upon British soil. And here, in all probability, nearly a hundred and fifty years later, Augustine and his band of missionaries disembarked.

To those who are attentive to the parallels of history, a comparison of these two landings cannot fail to prove instructive. Each marked the beginning of a revolution in the fortunes of this island. In each case the precursors of the revolution were few in number. Three warships, it is said, were sufficient to transport the Jutish warriors; and Augustine's company consisted of some forty men. But, as the Jutes were the forerunners of a great multitude from Germany, so the Romans prepared the way for the forces of Western civilization. The mission of the Jutes was destructive. They came with fire and sword, to extirpate the remnants of Roman colonization, to sever the ties which bound the island to the continent, and to mould it into a small isolated world of their own. The mission of Augustine was reconstructive. To him it was given to heal the breach which the Jutes had made, to restore the Roman influence in Britain, to replace the name of Britain in the catalogue of civilized nations. The second landing at Ebbsfleet was certainly, to a great extent, "a reversal and undoing" of the first. It signified the return of the Romans to the land of Caesar's triumphs, the bringing back of Roman language, Roman thought, Roman culture, Roman religion, and even in some measure Roman law, to the new home of the English peoples. It was the retort of the West to the challenge of the Northmen, the last act in the drama of Roman conquest in Britain.

So soon as the missionaries found themselves on English soil, they sent a message to King Ethelbert, to the effect that

[1] The estuary was not completely silted up at any point until the reign of Henry VIII. Twine *De Reb. Albion.* i. 25.

"they had come from Rome with the best of tidings, even the assurance to all who would accept it, of eternal joys in heaven and a kingdom without end with the living and true God." Ethelbert, however, was not the man to commit himself hastily. He had no intention of imperilling his influence or popularity by any rash or ill-considered act. On the other hand, he had seen something of Christianity as practised by the queen and her chaplain, and he was not unkindly disposed towards the foreign cult. He accordingly sent word to the missionaries to remain where they were until he had taken counsel what was to be done, and in the mean time he promised to supply their wants.

A few days afterwards the king accorded an interview to the new-comers. But first he took precautions to protect himself against possible danger. A firm belief in the baleful power of magic and incantation was one of the prime articles in the creed of Anglo-Saxon heathenism, and Ethelbert had a wholesome fear of being bewitched.[1] He determined, therefore,

[1] For the use of charms and incantations, see Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 22, 27; Eddius *Life of Wilfrid* c. 13; Theodore's *Penitential* I. xv. § 4; Council of Clovesho, c. 3; Egbert's *Penitential* viii. Pliny *Hist. Nat.* xxxiii. 21 says that the magical ceremonies of Britain were so wonderful "that it seems as if she might have taught the Magi of Persia." Compare generally Elton's *Origins* cc. 10, 12 (p. 390 *sqq.*). For magic in Ireland, see Todd's *St. Patrick* p. 123 *sqq.* Gregory of Tours recounts several instances of alleged murders by magic in Gaul: *Hist. Franc.* v. 5, 40; vi. 35 (a noticeable chapter); vi. 41; ix. 38. The same historian says that the Huns defeated the Franks by magic (*ibid.* iv. 29); and that the murderers of Sigibert were *maleficati* by Fredegundis (*ibid.* iv. 52). A remarkable account of a woman "spiritum pythonis habens" will be found in vii. 44 (cf. v. 14). In *Mirac.* ii. 45 Gregory tells of the attempted cure of a sick boy by an "ariolus": "Ille vero venire non differens accessit ad aegrotum et artem suam exercere conatur. Incantationes immurmurat, sortes iactat, ligaturas collo suspendit, promittit vivere quem ipse mancipaverat morti." See also *De Mirac. S. Martini* i. 26: "a sortilegis et ariolis ligamenta ei et potiones deferebant"; and *ibid.* iv. 36. Attempts were made to suppress these practices: Conc. Autissiod. an. 578, c. 4; Conc. Narbon. an. 589, c. 14, 15. On the mode of celebrating the Kalends of January, see Isidor. *De Eccles. Officiis* i. 41. Compare also, among the Lombards, *Rotharis Leges* 375 (vampires and witches). Gregory writes that a poor woman came to Rome to complain of the persecution to which she was subjected by a certain converted Jew named Theodore, who endeavoured to injure her by incantations (*Epp.* vii. 41). So also we read of certain Sicilian clerics who were alleged to be guilty of "canterma" (*ibid.* v. 39). In the *Dialogues* i. 4 we have an account of one Basilius, "qui in magicis operibus primus fuit": and also in i. 10 a story of the attempted cure of a possessed woman by magical arts.

to confront Augustine in the open air, where, if he chanced to be a magician, his spells would have less potency than within doors. The meeting probably took place at Richborough, and the scene must have been striking. On one side were Ethelbert and his nobles, a brilliant group, with their bright cloaks and coloured leg-bands, embroidered belts girding their linen tunics, and golden rings and sword-hilts glittering in the sunshine. On the other side, in curious contrast, the monks advanced in slow procession, bearing before them a great silver cross and a picture of the Saviour painted on a gilded board, and chanting solemn litanies, "entreating the Lord to save both them and those to whom they came." The sacred emblems, the chanting in the unknown tongue, the stately form of Augustine towering head and shoulders above his companions, must have produced no slight impression on the English. Nor, doubtless, was this lessened when the handsome Roman, sitting at the king's command, began to tell, through interpreters, "how the pitiful Jesus by His own agony had redeemed the sinful world, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers."[1] When the sermon was over, Ethelbert made a friendly answer: "Beautiful words and promises are these, but they are strange and doubtful, and I cannot agree to them and desert the faith which I and the whole English nation have so long upheld. But since you have come from afar to make known to us what you believe to be best and truest, we will not harm you; rather we will treat you kindly and supply all your needs, and we give you permission to bring over such as you can to your belief." The straightforward fairness of this speech is beyond praise. Yet Ethelbert was not only fair; he was generous. In Canterbury itself, the metropolis of his kingdom, built upon the site of the old Roman town of Durovernum, he allotted a residence to the missionaries.

Durovernum was once a walled town of considerable military importance, being the point at which the several roads from Reculver, Richborough, and Dover merged on their way to London. But when Augustine first set eyes upon it, the ancient Roman walls enclosed for the most part a dreary ruin. The

[1] Aelfric, ap. Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 11. Compare Gocelin's account (*Vita Aug.* 16, 17).

wooden dwellings of Ethelbert and his Kentishmen, which had gradually been extending from the site of the first small settlement beyond the north-eastern wall, occupied as yet but a small portion of the ancient area; and when the Roman missionaries looked for the first time on the scene of their future labours, the prospect must have seemed a little cheerless. Yet they pressed on hopefully, passed the Roman chapel named after St. Martin,[1] where Bishop Liudhard was accustomed to officiate, and as they entered the city formed up in procession, and, raising aloft the silver cross and the picture of the Crucified, commenced to chant the solemn antiphon which they had heard, perhaps, in Gaul upon Rogation Days: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, according to all Thy mercy, let Thine anger and wrath be turned away from this city and from Thy holy house, for we have sinned.[2] Alleluia!" So, after many years, the Romans once more passed through the gates of Roman Durovernum.[3]

Ethelbert appointed them a dwelling at the Stable-gate, "in the parish of St. Alphege, over against the King's Street, on the north"[4]; and here, says Bede, the monks "lived after the fashion of the early Church, giving themselves to frequent prayers, watchings, and fastings, preaching the word of life to as many as they could, despising all worldly things as alien to them, receiving only bare necessaries from those they taught, practising in all things their precepts, and ever prepared to suffer any adversity, or even to die for the truth which they proclaimed." They shared St. Martin's Church with Liudhard, and here they were constantly to be found, chanting the psalms, or preaching, or offering masses, or baptizing those whom they converted. For the influence of these quiet evangelists soon made itself felt in the community, and not a few Kentishmen embraced the faith, "admiring the simplicity of their innocent life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine."[5]

[1] The cult of St. Martin of Tours was once popular in Britain. H. and S. (i. 13) cite Venantius Fortunatus's line—

"Quem Hispanus, Maurus, Persa, Britannus amat."

[2] Daniel ix. 16.

[3] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 25; Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 19.

[4] Elmham *Hist. Mon. S. Aug.* p. 91: "Mansio signatur quae Stabelgate notatur." Thorn (*X. Script.* 1759): "in parochia S. Aelphegi ex opposito regiae stratae versus aquilonem."

[5] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 26.

The successes of Augustine may well have encouraged Queen Bertha to make a special effort for the conversion of her husband, and her endeavours, seconded by the prayers and preaching of the missionaries, at last produced an effect. On the 1st of June 597, which was the eve of Whit-Sunday, there was enacted a scene of tremendous import for the future of English Christianity. About two o'clock in the afternoon, King Ethelbert, arrayed in his white baptismal robes, betook himself to St. Martin's Church, where a great concourse had doubtless already assembled. When the lessons with their appropriate collects had been recited at the altar, the choir began to chant a litany, and the clergy walked in solemn procession to the font. Here were said the prayers of Benediction, and the sign of the cross was made in the water. Then Augustine, turning to Ethelbert, put to him the interrogatories: "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?" "I believe." "Dost thou believe also in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was born and suffered?" "I believe." "Dost thou believe also in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Resurrection of the Flesh, and the Life everlasting?" "I believe." Then: "Wilt thou be baptized?" "I will." Water was thrice poured over the king as the baptismal formula was uttered, and afterwards the sign of the cross was made on his head with the chrism, and the short prayer was said: "Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath regenerated thee by water and the Holy Ghost, and hath given to thee remission of all thy sins, anoint thee with the chrism of salvation unto eternal life."[1]

After this fateful day—"dies Anglis et Angelis solemnissimus"—the work of conversion went on apace. The example of the king naturally produced a profound impression. And though he wisely refrained from enforcing Christianity on his

[1] In the case of Ethelbert, according to Bede's account at least, we find no trace of the vulgar pomp which characterized the baptism of Clovis. See Greg. Tur. *H. F.* ii. 31: "Velis depictis adumbrantur plateae ecclesiae, cortinis albentibus adornantur, baptisterium componitur, balsama diffunduntur, micant flagrantes odore cerei, totumque templum baptisterii divino respergitur ab odore, talemque ibi gratiam astantibus Deus tribuit, ut aestimarent se paradisi odoribus collocari." Gocelin, however, writes (*Vita Aug.* 22): "Ornatur ecclesia, decorantur baptisteria, consecratur Iordanici et Paradisiaci fluminis urna."

subjects, yet the greater affection which he manifested towards believers was an incentive to others to embrace the new religion. Thus, in the words of Bede, "greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the Word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to associate themselves by believing with the unity of the Church of Christ." [1]

It is not without a pathetic significance that one week after Ethelbert's baptism, which marked the triumph of the Roman missionaries in the south, there passed away, in the northern island of Iona, the fine old Irish missionary and saint, Columba. He had come from Ireland in the year 563, with twelve companions, to preach to his fellow-Scots in British Dalriada. Having gained the favour of King Conall, he founded, on the barren little island of Hy, the famous monastery which was destined to become the principal source and the centre of the Christianity of the north. Here Columba lived for more than thirty years, leading the double life of a missionary and a monk. Hence he issued forth on preaching expeditions to convert the heathen Picts, visiting King Brude in his fortress, overcoming the opposition of the Druids, and by his miracles and teaching planting the seeds of Christianity in the hearts of the wild people. Here, at other times, he gave himself to watching and fasting, spending long hours of wintry nights in prayer, and sometimes continuing for days together in ecstatic trance. Here he received the crowds of visitors who flocked to him from all sides, some to be received as monks, some to get absolution for their crimes, some to be helped or healed of their diseases, or advised. And here at the last, some time after midnight on Saturday, the 8th of June 597, the noble spirit of the greatest of the Irish monks passed to its rest.[2]

[1] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 26. The heathen temples, however, were not formally abolished in Kent till the year 640.

[2] Adamnan's description of Columba is worth quoting: "Erat aspectu angelicus, sermone nitidus, opere sanctus, ingenio optimus, consilio magnus, per annos xxxiv. insulanus miles conversatus. Nullum etiam unius horae intervallum transire poterat, quo non aut orationi aut lectioni vel scriptioni vel etiam alicui operationi incumberet. Ieiunationum quoque et vigiliarum indefessis laboribus sine ulla intermissione die noctuque ita occupatus, ut supra humanam possibilitatem uniuscuiusque pondus specialis videretur operis. Et inter haec omnibus carus, hilarem semper faciem ostendens sanctam, Spiritus Sancti gaudio intimis laetificabatur praecordiis" (*Vita Columbae* Praef. ii.).

There are few passages in literature more affecting than Adamnan's description of the last day of the old saint's toilsome life. Those closing scenes made an impression on those who were present, such as none could ever forget; and they have been recorded for us with a fulness and truthfulness of detail which may enable us to realize what Columba was and how he attracted men, far better than all the narratives of the miracles which he wrought and the visions which he saw. The story is further interesting as the only detailed account which we possess of the last hours of any of the great Christian saints of this period.[1]

"It was the last day of the week, and the saint, with his dutiful attendant Diormit, went to the nearest barn to bless it. When he had entered and had blessed the two heaps of corn that were stored therein, he thanked God, saying: 'I am very glad for my monks, since, if I am to depart from you this year, you will have enough corn to last.' Now, when Diormit, his attendant, heard this, he began to be sorrowful, and said: 'This year, my father, you often trouble us by talking of your departure from us.' To whom the saint replied: 'I have a little secret for you, which will tell you more plainly of my end, but you must promise faithfully to repeat it to no one before I am gone.' When the attendant, on his knees, had given the promise which the saint required, the holy man went on: 'This day in the sacred volumes is called the Sabbath, which is by interpretation, Rest. And for me this day is a Sabbath indeed, for it is the last of my toilsome life, and on it, after all my weary labours, I shall rest. In the middle of the solemn night of the Lord's Day which is at hand, according to the saying of the Scriptures, I shall go the way of my fathers. Already my Lord Christ Jesus deigns to invite me, and in the middle of the night, as He bids me, I shall go to Him. For thus has it been revealed to me by the Lord Himself.' Then the attendant, hearing these sad words, wept bitterly. But Columba sought to comfort him as well as he could."

They left the granary to return to the monastery, but halfway back the saint, whose feeble strength was soon exhausted, sat down to rest beside the road at a spot where afterwards a cross was placed, to commemorate the touching scene now

[1] Adamnan *Vita Columbae* iii. 23.

witnessed there. Columba had always been distinguished for his love of animals, and now, at the end of his life, he was to receive a striking proof of the affection which they felt in return for him. An old white horse, "the faithful servant which for many years had carried the milk-pails between the cow-house and the monastery," drew near, and laid its head upon Columba's breast, and, as though it knew that it would never see its master any more, began to moan, "shedding tears abundantly like a human being." Diormit would have driven the creature away, but the saint forbade him, saying: "Let him alone. As he loves me so, let him weep his bitter sorrow on my breast. Lo! you, though you are a man and have a rational soul, would have known nothing about my near departure, had I not told you; but to this brute animal without a reason, the Creator has revealed, in whatever way He willed, that his master is about to leave him." With these words he stretched out his hands and blessed his old servant the horse, and the beast went sorrowfully away.

After this they climbed the little hill above the monastery, and Columba, standing awhile upon the top, lifted up both hands and blessed the monastery, saying: "This place is small and of no reputation, yet not only the Scotic kings with their peoples, but even the rulers of strange and foreign nations with their subjects, shall confer great honour on it, and by the saints also of other Churches it shall be held in great respect."

Even when they returned to the monastery, the old man could not be idle, so he sat in his little hut, busy on his favourite work of transcribing the Psalter. In after-years it was noticed, as a happy coincidence, that the last words he wrote were those of the thirty-fourth Psalm: "*But they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.*" When he had finished the page on which he was engaged, it was time for Nocturns. Columba went to the chapel, and, after the service was over, returned to his hut, and sat down upon the bare rock which for many years had served him as a bed. Sitting there through the brief watches of the summer night, he gave to his attendant, who alone was with him, a last charge to the brethren. "These my last words, O my children, I commend to you, that you be at peace and have sincere love one towards another And if you thus live, following the example

of the holy fathers, God, the Comforter of righteous men, will help you, and I, abiding with Him, will intercede for you; and not only will He supply you in abundance with such things as are necessary for this present life, but He will also grant unto you the rewards of the eternal blessings, which are laid up for them that keep the commandments of God." These were the saint's last words. The longed-for hour of his departure was at hand, and he sat in silence waiting for the call.

It came to him a little before daybreak, when the striking of a bell summoned the sleeping monks to Matins. At the sound Columba rose, and, hurrying into church before the rest, fell on his knees beside the altar. Diormit, following more slowly, fancied that he saw in the distance a blaze of angelic light flashing around the saint, but when he crossed the threshold of the chapel, all was dark. Groping his way in, he cried aloud in distress, "Where are you, my father?" But there was no answer. Still groping his way, he found Columba stretched upon the ground before the altar, and, sitting down beside him, he raised him a little and laid his head upon his bosom. Meanwhile the rest of the monks came hurrying in with lights, and began to weep sore when they saw their abbat dying. Through their tears, however, they noticed that Columba's eyes were raised, and that he gazed around him with such wonderful joy, that they fancied he beheld the angels coming to receive him. He could no longer speak to them, but with Diormit's help he contrived to raise his right hand and make the sign of benediction. It was the last effort, and immediately afterwards his spirit departed. "And when the soul had left the tabernacle of the body, his face remained so bright, so wonderfully gladdened by the angelic vision, that he seemed not to be dead, but as one who was alive and slept. Meanwhile the whole church re-echoed with mournful lamentations."

Such was the passing of Columba. But far away in Rome, Pope Gregory was anxiously waiting to hear how his Augustine fared among the heathen, in utter ignorance, it appears, of the great work which for more than thirty years the Irish monks had been carrying on in Northern Britain. Indeed, there is no more remarkable proof of the isolation of the contemporary Irish Church from the rest of Christendom, than the absence of any reference or allusion to it in Gregory's

correspondence. With all the other branches of the Catholic Church in the West Gregory was brought into contact in the course of his pontificate; with the Church in Ireland and Britain alone he held no communication. Nevertheless, the Irish legends would make out that Columba's work, and even Columba himself, was known to Gregory. One of them relates that "at a time when Columkille was in Hy, without any attendant but Baithene only, it was revealed to him that guests had arrived, namely, seven of Gregory's people, who had come to him from Rome with gifts, to wit, the Great Gem of Columkille (which is a cross at the present day), and the Hymns of the Week, that is a book with hymns for each night of the week, and other gifts."[1] Another story tells that when King Brandubh was killed, the demons carried off his soul into the air. "And they passed over Hy, and Columkille heard them while he was writing, and he stuck the style into his cloak, and went to the battle in defence of Brandubh's soul. And the battle passed over Rome, and the style fell out of Columkille's cloak and dropped in front of Gregory, who took it up in his hand. Columkille followed the soul of Brandubh to heaven. When he reached it the congregation of heaven were at celebration, namely, 'Te decet hymnus,' and 'Benedic anima mea,' and 'Laudate pueri Dominum'; and this is the beginning of the celebration of heaven. And they brought Brandubh's soul back to his body again. Columkille tarried with Gregory, and brought away Gregory's brooch with him, and it is the hereditary brooch of the coarb of Columkille to this day. And he left his style with Gregory."[2] Wildly fanciful though these stories may be, they are interesting as illustrating the tendency of later times to connect all the prominent saints of this period in some way or other with the great Pope Gregory.

With the baptism of Ethelbert ends the first act of the conversion of the English. So far the Roman mission had been an unqualified success. All Kent was in a fair way to become Christian, and there was hope that, by means of the "imperium" wielded by Ethelbert, the new religion would spread yet further among the neighbouring kingdoms. With this prospect before him, Augustine deemed it advisable to act without delay on the

[1] Reeves *Adamnan* p. 318.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 205, *note.*

instructions he had previously received from Gregory,[1] and get ordained to the episcopate. He accordingly crossed to Gaul, and sought out the metropolitan see of Arles, the bishop of which, Virgilius, had received from Gregory two years before the pallium and the vicariate.[2] And here, in the autumn of 597—the traditional date, November the 16th, can scarcely be right[3]—he was consecrated by Virgilius and his suffragans, "Archbishop of the English." The title, presupposing as it does a political unity at this time non-existent among the English peoples, was, if premature, at least prophetic. For in making the ideal unity into a reality, no one helped more than Augustine and his successors. The religion taught by them, the common government, institutions, and services of the common Church, were more efficacious in welding together the isolated kingdoms than was even the bond of a kindred origin. Christianity was a potent factor in the creation of the English nation.

Meanwhile the work in Kent had been going forward without interruption, and when Augustine returned from Gaul he found to his delight a great multitude of new converts awaiting him. On Christmas Day, 597, more than ten thousand persons were baptized by him, probably in the Swale, near the mouth of the Medway.[4] King Ethelbert, too, treated the missionaries with increasing kindness and generosity. There is a story that he even gave up his own palace to them and transferred his capital to Reculver; but had there been any truth in the legend it is scarcely credible that Bede should have made no allusion to it. The tale is most probably an invention of the clergy of Canterbury, based upon the ecclesiastical fiction of the Donation of Constantine.[5] But though

[1] *Epp.* viii. 29: "Qui data a me licentia a Germaniarum episcopis episcopus factus." The *S. Gallen Life* c. 11 seems to say that Gregory himself consecrated Augustine.

[2] Baeda *H. E.* i. 27, and (following him) Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 36, make Aetherius bishop of Arles. Bede thought that Aetherius was the predecessor of Virgilius (*ibid.* i. 23). Of course, Aetherius was bishop of Lyons and contemporary with Virgilius of Arles.

[3] November 16th was not a Sunday in 597.

[4] *Epp.* viii. 29.

[5] Note the expression in Gocelin's *Life of Augustine* c. 22: "baptizat noster Sylvester nostrum Constantinum"; and that Bede's words, "in Doruverni metropoli sua" (i. 26), are distinctly against the idea that the capital was changed. The same expression, "novus Constantinus," is used

Ethelbert did not imitate the mythical generosity of the first Christian Emperor, he certainly did assign to the missionaries a residence in Canterbury "suitable to their rank," and provided an endowment sufficient for their maintenance. Close to his home Augustine found a ruined church, dating from the Roman-British times, and this, with the king's permission and assistance, he rebuilt and dedicated on the mass-day of SS. Primus and Felicianus, the 9th of June, (probably) of the year 603.[1] This, the mother-church of England, like the mother-church of Rome, the great Basilica of Constantine, was dedicated "in the name of St. Saviour, our God and Lord Jesus Christ."[2] "In restoring the old fabric," says Dr. Bright,[3] "Augustine enlarged it into stately proportions and modelled its arrangements from the Vatican basilica of St. Peter. The nave had aisles and towers on the north and south: eastward of the 'choir of the singers' there was, as in the present church, a lofty ascent, required by the construction of the crypt 'such as the Romans call a Confession.' The account extant speaks of two apses, at the eastern and western ends, each with its altar: in the western, against the wall, stood the episcopal throne, and some way to the east of it was an altar which is distinguished from 'the great altar' at the east end, but which, from its nearness to the 'cathedra,' is thought to have been the original altar, as was the case in St. Peter's."

Some time afterwards Augustine reclaimed and rededicated another British church, which had been used as a pagan temple, and is said to have been the very shrine in which King Ethelbert had been accustomed to worship before his conversion. Augustine broke the idol it contained, purified the building, and dedicated it in honour of St. Pancras, the boy-martyr reverenced

of Clovis the Frank by Greg. Tur. *H. F.* ii. 31, who also compares Remigius with Silvester.

[1] *Ang.-Saxon Chron.* ad ann. 995 gives the date June 9, after the return of the messengers from Rome with the Responsa. The year (if this is right) cannot have been earlier than 602; I prefer 603, since in that year June 9 fell on a Sunday. The *Chron.* states that the Church was dedicated "in the name of Christ and St. Mary."

[2] Baeda *H. E.* i. 33. King Wihtred's privilege describes it as "ecclesiam Salvatoris quae sita est in civitate Dorobernia" (Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 240). Compare the *Sax. Chron.* last note. Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 23, says: "In metropoli sua Salvatoris basilicam Augustino suo condendam et possidendam opitulantissime determinat."

[3] W. Bright *Early English Church History* p. 56.

in later times as the patron saint of children. A reason for the dedication to this particular saint may perhaps be found in the fact that the land on which St. Andrew's Monastery in Rome was built had formerly belonged to the family of St. Pancras; perhaps, too, since Pancras was regarded as preeminently the avenger of perjury, Augustine may have wished to have some consecrated place where oaths might be administered with more than ordinary solemnity. Close by this church, and like it a little way beyond the city wall to the east, Augustine began to build another monastery—known first as St. Peter's, and later as St. Augustine's—and within it Ethelbert was persuaded to erect a church in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul, to serve as a burying-place for the archbishops of Canterbury and the kings of Kent. But this church was not finished and consecrated till the episcopate of Laurentius.[1]

Shortly after his return from Gaul, probably in the spring of 598, Augustine reopened communications with Pope Gregory. As the number of converts increased, the need for more missionaries became urgent. The harvest—so Augustine wrote[2]—was great, but the labourers were all too few. Moreover, in organizing his new church, the archbishop had met with many difficulties, for the solution of which he wished to have Gregory's assistance. Accordingly he sent to Rome two of his companions—a priest named Laurentius afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, and the monk Peter the first abbat of the Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul—who were commissioned to ask for more workers, to make a report of all that had been done, and to deliver a paper of questions on which the Pope's decision was invited. The messengers arrived in the early summer, and Gregory listened to their story with the greatest joy. He wrote off at once to tell the good tidings to Eulogius, the Patriarch of Alexandria, who had promised to pray for the success of the mission. "I have told you all this, that you may know that your prayers are no less effective in the ends of the world than your sermons are in Alexandria. For your prayers reach to places where you

[1] Baeda *H. E.* i. 33; ii. 3. For a spurious Bull of Pope Boniface IV, addressed to Ethelbert, relating to this church and monastery, see H. and S. iii. 67–69.

[2] Baeda *H. E.* i. 29.

are not, while your good works are manifested in the place where you are."[1] Incredible as it may seem, however, Gregory delayed no less than three years before answering the letter of Augustine himself. Bede, indeed, says that the replies were sent "without delay"[2]; but letters entrusted to the returning monks are dated June 601. Such procrastination is all the more extraordinary because Gregory was a man pre-eminently distinguished for business-like precision. The Preface to the *Responsa* (which, however, does not occur in Bede[3]) makes some attempt to account for the delay on the score of Gregory's sufferings with the gout. But illness alone, or even illness combined with the press of other business, can scarcely have hindered the Pope from answering for so long a time. A more probable explanation seems to be that Gregory kept back his reply until he could send with it some new recruits for the work in Britain, and that fit men could not be procured in a hurry. Yet even this excuse, though not devoid of weight, is scarcely a satisfactory explanation of a silence so prolonged.

At last, however, Laurentius and Peter became impatient, and importuned Gregory to let them depart. Permission was granted them in the summer of 601, and they set out speedily from Rome, accompanied by a fresh band of missionary monks. The most distinguished of these were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, of whom the first three became conspicuous as the first English bishops of London, Rochester, and York, while the fourth was afterwards abbat of St. Augustine's Monastery at Canterbury. The route followed by this second mission is uncertain. They had letters of commendation to Queen Brunichildis, to Theodoric, king of Burgundy, and to the bishops of Toulon, Marseilles, Gap, Arles, Vienne, Lyons, and Chalon-sur-Saône.[4] So far their course is clearly the same as that which Augustine and his companions had formerly taken; for the letter to the Bishop of Gap (supposing him to be in his episcopal city) could be delivered by some members of the party making a *détour* to that place and rejoining the rest at Vienne

[1] *Epp.* viii. 29.

[2] Baeda *H. E.* i. 27: "Nec mora, congrua quaestui responsa recepit."

[3] *Epp.* xi. 56*a*. Hartmann believes it to be genuine, and there seems to be nothing against it save the fact of its omission by Bede.

[4] *Ibid.* xi. 34, 40, 41, 42, 45 (Baeda, i. 28), 47, 48.

or Lyons. But after Chalon we are unable to follow them. They had letters to Theudebert, king of Austrasia,[1] to the Bishop of Metz,[2] to Chlotochar of Neustria,[3] and to the bishops of Angers, Rouen, and Paris.[4] That they were intended to visit all these places is scarcely probable. Gregory doubtless felt that until the missionaries reached Chalon they would be unable to decide definitely upon their further course, and he accordingly gave them such recommendations as would be likely to serve them on whatever route they finally determined to pursue.

The monks carried with them some presents to King Ethelbert, and a quantity of articles which the Pope deemed "necessary for the service and ministry of the Church" in England—"sacred vessels, and vestments for the altars, ornaments for the churches, dresses for the priests and clergy, relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs, and several books."[5] These last are said to have been of great beauty, written upon rose-coloured leaves, adorned with miniatures, and enclosed in splendid silver cases set with precious stones. In the Bodleian at Oxford, and in the library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge, are two ancient manuscripts, copies of the Gospels, which have been thought to have once formed part of Gregory's gift. But the Oxford manuscript, at any rate, is not earlier than the middle of the seventh century.

Together with these presents Gregory entrusted to the missionaries some very interesting letters.

Two of them were complimentary letters to the king and the queen. To Bertha the Pope wrote, thanking her for the help which she had rendered to Augustine, and exhorting her in earnest terms to strengthen her husband in the love of the Christian faith, that through her the mercy of God might work for the conversion of the English, as once it had worked through Helena for the conversion of the Romans. In his characteristic way Gregory mingles in his letter somewhat of bitter and sweet. He cannot refrain from rebuking Bertha for her carelessness

[1] *Epp.* xi. 50.
[2] *Ibid.* xi. 41.
[3] *Ibid.* xi. 51.
[4] *Ibid.* xi. 41.
[5] Baeda *H. E.* i. 29. A list of gifts sent to the English Church by Gregory is printed in Elmham (pp. 96–102), but is too late in date to be of any authority (H. and S. iii. 60). Of the codices Elmham says: "Haec sunt primitiae librorum totius Ecclesiae Anglicanae"—"an interesting remark, which cannot, however, be literally true." See Plummer's *Bede* vol. ii. p. 56.

in allowing Ethelbert to remain so long in heathenism, but at the same time he flatters her vanity as a queen and a woman, by telling her that her recent good works have attracted the attention even of "the Most Serene Emperor at Constantinople."[1] King Ethelbert, likewise, was addressed in a style of mingled compliment and admonition. Gregory seems to have considered the king too lukewarm in the propagation of the gospel among his subjects; he desired that the true religion should be spread among the English by any means, even, if necessary, by force. "Almighty God," he wrote, "places good men in authority that He may impart through them the gifts of His mercy to their subjects. And this we find to be the case with the English over whom you have been appointed to rule, that through the blessings bestowed on you the blessings of heaven might be bestowed on your people also. Therefore, my glorious son, guard with all care the grace you have received from God. Hasten to extend the Christian faith among your subjects, increase your righteous zeal for their conversion, put down the worship of idols, destroy the temples, build up your people in all purity of life, by exhortations, by threats, by encouragements, by punishments, by setting a good example yourself, so that in heaven you may receive a recompense from Him, the knowledge of whose Name you will have magnified upon earth. For He will render your name more glorious to posterity, as you seek and preserve His honour among men."[2]

It will be noticed that in this letter Gregory charges Ethelbert to destroy the heathen temples. On further consideration, however, he came to the conclusion that a milder course, such as, after all, was most in accordance with the policy hitherto followed by the Roman Church, would in the end be more effective, particularly in a country where the people had so recently abjured their heathenism. He therefore despatched a special messenger after the missionaries, bearing a letter to Mellitus with fresh instructions on this matter.[3] "Since the

[1] *Epp.* xi. 35. This letter is undated. It was probably written soon after the arrival of Laurentius and Peter in 598 (see references to them in the beginning), but was not sent till 601 (H. and S. iii. p. 32).

[2] *Ibid.* xi. 37; Baeda *H. E.* i. 32. The letter is dated June 22, 601.

[3] *Ibid.* xi. 56; Baeda *H. E.* i. 30. By substituting "Augustarum" for the word "Juliarum" (which is obviously wrong), we get the date July 18, 601. See Plummer's note *in loc.*

departure of our monks who are with you, we have felt very anxious because we have received no tidings of the success of your journey. But when Almighty God shall bring you to our most reverend brother, Bishop Augustine, tell him that after long consideration I have decided that the idol-temples of the English ought not to be destroyed, but only the idols that are in them. Let them be sprinkled with consecrated water, and let altars be erected and relics placed there; for if the temples are well built they ought to be diverted from the worship of idols to the service of the true God. Thus when the people see that their temples are not destroyed, they may come the more readily to the old familiar places, laying aside the error of their hearts, and acknowledging and adoring the true God. And since they are in the habit of slaughtering many oxen in sacrifice to demons,[1] some change might also be made with regard to this observance. On the day of the dedication, or on the festivals of the holy martyrs whose relics are deposited there, let them make themselves tabernacles of tree-branches round the reclaimed shrines, and celebrate the festival with religious feasts.[2] Let them no longer sacrifice animals to the devil, but kill them to the glory of God for their own eating, giving thanks to the Giver of all things for satisfying their wants. Thus, while they are suffered to retain some outward pleasures, they may the more readily consent to seek the happiness which is within. For it is undoubtedly impossible to root out everything at once from savage hearts, and he who wishes to ascend a height must mount, not by leaps, but step by step."

[1] In the pagan ritual, "all kinds of cattle as well as horses were slaughtered, and the blood was called *hlaut : hlaut-staves* were made, like sprinkling-brushes, with which the whole of the altars and the temple-walls both outside and inside were sprinkled over, and the people also were sprinkled with the blood; but the flesh was boiled into savoury meat for those who were present" (Elton's *Origins* p. 396).

[2] At dedications and on other festivals it was customary to hold public feasts. Gregory himself, to celebrate the dedication of an oratory at Palermo, made a grant of 10 gold solidi, 30 amphorae of wine, 200 loaves, 2 orcae of oil, 12 sheep, and 100 hens (*Epp.* i. 54). See also Greg. Tur. *Vita S. Martini* i. 6; *Mirac.* ii. 16. Flodoard. *Hist. Rhemens.* i. 18 quotes the will of St. Remigius: "Agathemero nepoti meo vineam dono, quam posui Vindonissae, et meo labore constitui; sub ea conditione ut a partibus suis omnibus diebus festis et dominicis pro commemoratione mea sacris altaribus offeratur oblatio et Laudunensibus presbyteris atque diaconibus annua convivia concedente Deo praebeantur."

It is difficult to criticize Gregory's direction in this matter without a more precise knowledge of the condition of the converted people. The rival policies of iconoclasm and "economy" have at all times had their advocates, but in each case mere *a priori* arguments carry little weight. The success of either course of action must necessarily depend on special circumstances and conditions, which can be known only to the religious teachers working on the spot. We observe that Bede, with his experience of English life and religion, seems to have approved and recommended a policy of "condescension" of the same character as that enjoined by Gregory, and that Irish saints like Patrick and Columba are reported to have acted on a similar principle. On the other hand, the Laws and Penitentials supply us with incontrovertible evidence that these measures of compromise, while making the profession of Christianity easier, were ineffectual in eradicating heathenism. Long after Gregory was dead, the idol-sacrifices, the worship at fountains, stones, and trees, the eating of consecrated flesh, the multitudinous forms of augury and divination, continued to be practised by the people.[1] But whether the continuance of these abuses can be attributed to an initial mistake of a compromise with heathenism, and whether more drastic measures would really have succeeded in preventing their survival, we cannot at this time pretend to determine.

The remaining three letters were all addressed to Augustine. The first was of a private character, its occasion being as follows. The messengers from England, when they came to Rome, reported to Gregory that many miracles had been performed by their bishop, which had greatly helped forward the work of conversion. The fame of these wonders had spread to Gaul, and come to the ears of Queen Brunchildis,[2] and the messengers were perhaps a little inclined to boast of the circumstance. To question the genuineness of these miracles did not, of course, occur to Gregory; he joyfully wrote to his friend Eulogius that Augustine and his companions seemed to be imitating the powers of the Apostles in the signs which they displayed.[3] He was a little alarmed, however, lest Augustine

[1] See the note in Bright's *Early English Church History* p. 80, and that in Plummer's *Bede* vol. ii. pp. 57–60.

[2] *Epp.* xi. 48.

[3] *Ibid.* viii. 29.

might be unduly elated by the gift he had received. He therefore wrote him a special letter, earnestly warning him against this danger.[1] "I know, my dear brother, that Almighty God shows forth great miracles through you among the people He has chosen. Therefore you must rejoice over the heavenly gift with fear, and fear while you rejoice. You have reason to rejoice because the souls of the English are led through the outward miracles to the inward grace; but you have reason to fear lest, while the miracles are wrought, the weak mind should be exalted in self-confidence, and so the very circumstance, which outwardly raises you high in honour, should inwardly cause you to fall through vain-glory. For we ought to remember that when the disciples returned from their preaching with great joy, and said to their Heavenly Master: *Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name,* they heard at once the words: *In this rejoice not, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.* When they rejoiced over the miracles, they were thinking only of a passing joy, possessed by themselves alone. But they were recalled from the joy which is personal to that which is public, from that which is temporary to that which is eternal, when it was said to them: *In this rejoice that your names are written in heaven.* For miracles are not wrought by all the elect, but all the elect have their names written in heaven. And the disciples of the Truth should not rejoice save in that blessing which is common to them all, in which the joy is endless. It remains, then, my dear brother, that while God works through you outwardly, you should always strictly examine yourself inwardly, and should recognize clearly both what you are yourself, and how great is God's favour towards that nation, for the conversion of which you have received the gift of showing signs and wonders. And whenever you find that you have sinned against our Creator in word or deed, bear the fact constantly in mind, that the recollection of guilt may keep down the rising vanity of the heart. Whatever power you have received, or shall hereafter receive, of working miracles,

[1] *Epp.* xi. 36; Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 31. For date, see H. and S. iii. p. 32. The only instance of Augustine's miracles reported by Bede is the healing of a blind man (*H. E.* ii. 2). Compare the testimony of the old man in Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 49 (quoted above, p. 105, *n.* 1). Baeda *H. E.* ii. 1 implies that others of the mission besides Augustine wrought miracles; and this is expressly asserted by Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 20.

believe that the gift is intended not for you, but for them for whose salvation the power is conferred on you."

The second letter to Augustine was connected with the gift of the pallium, in this case the symbol of archiepiscopal jurisdiction.[1] After a few complimentary expressions, and the usual direction that the pallium was to be worn only during mass, Gregory proceeded to develop a scheme for the constitution of the Church in England. Augustine—whose metropolitan see is assumed to be, not Canterbury, but London[2]—was himself to ordain twelve bishops, who should be subject to his jurisdiction in the southern part of the island. Another bishop, selected and ordained by Augustine, was to be sent to York. If the people in that part of the country received the gospel, the bishop of York was also to consecrate twelve suffragans, and act as their metropolitan. During Augustine's lifetime all the bishops in the island were to be subject to him, but after his death the archbishops of London and York were to be independent of each other, the senior taking precedence, but each ruling his own province as metropolitan, each receiving the pallium from Rome, and each being consecrated by his own suffragans. To prevent all misconception or possibility of mistake, in the conclusion of his letter Gregory repeated his injunction that Augustine personally was to have jurisdiction over all the bishops of the island, both those ordained by himself and by the future archbishop of York, and also all the bishops of Britain, "that from the words and life of your Holiness they may learn the rule of a true faith and a righteous life." This scheme, based probably on Severus's division of the island into the provinces of Upper and Lower Britain, shows that Gregory

[1] *Epp.* xi. 39; Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 29.

[2] The southern archbishopric was never established at London. "The political dependence of London on Canterbury prevented this being done upon Augustine's death, and the apostasy of the Londoners (Baeda, ii. 5) hindered it thenceforward" (H. and S. iii. p. 67). Mr. Plummer observes that Kenulf of Mercia, writing to Pope Leo III in 798, speaks as though the primacy had been fixed at Canterbury by some formal decree. The king's words are: "Quia beatae recordationis Augustinus, qui verbum Dei, imperante Gregorio, Anglorum genti ministrabat, in eadem civitate diem obiit, et corpus illius in basilica beati Petri apostolorum principis . . . conditum fuisset, visum est cunctis gentis nostrae sapientibus, quatenus in illa civitate metropolitanus honor haberetur, ubi corpore pausat qui his partibus fidei veritatem inseruit" (H. and S. iii. p. 522).

was entirely ignorant of the state of things prevailing in his time. Of the political condition of the country, of the extent of the conversion, of the spirit and constitution of the British Church, he evidently had but the vaguest conception. He legislates for the Britain of the Roman period, not for the Britain of the Anglo-Saxons, and his scheme, at the time when it was propounded, was utterly impracticable. Augustine's metropolitan see continued to be fixed at Canterbury; two bishops only, instead of twelve, were consecrated by him in the south; the province of York remained unorganized; the British bishops refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the Roman. Nevertheless, although the Gregorian arrangement could not be realized for the moment, the wisdom with which it was conceived has since been justified. With the substitution of Canterbury for London, and some other inevitable changes of detail, the scheme represents, at least in outline, the constitution of the English Church as it exists in the present day.

The third document sent to Augustine was the celebrated *Responsa*, described by Montalembert as "the rule and code of Christian missions." It consists of a number of brief replies to questions addressed to the Pope by the Archbishop of the English, and reminds us somewhat of the rescripts which the old Roman Emperors issued for the guidance of provincial governors. The contents of this remarkable document—the authenticity of which is now admitted by the majority of scholars—may be summed up briefly.[1]

[1] *Epp.* xi. 56*a*; Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 27. The genuineness of this document is now generally admitted. It seems to have been first published by Bede, and the question arises—Whence did he obtain his copy? (1) It may have been transcribed by Nothelm or Albinus from the original document or a copy thereof preserved in Canterbury. (2) It may have been transcribed by Nothelm from a document preserved in the archives of the Roman Church (cf. Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* Praef.). At any rate, the letter was subsequently mislaid at Rome, for in 736 St. Boniface wrote to Nothelm: "Similiter et diligenter obsecro, ut illius epistolae, qua continetur, ut dicunt, interrogationes Augustini pontificis ac praedicatoris primi Anglorum et responsiones sancti Gregorii papae, exemplar mihi dirigere curetis, in qua inter caetera capitula continetur, quod in tertia generatione propinquitatis fidelibus liceat matrimonia copulare; et ut scrupulosa cautela diligenter investigare studeatis si illa conscriptio supradicti patris nostri sancti Gregorii esse conprobetur an non. Quia in scrinio Romanae ecclesiae, ut adfirmant scrinarii, cum caeteris exemplaribus supradicti pontificis quaesita non inveniebatur" (H. and S. iii. p. 336). The document was possibly overlooked in 736, "through its not being with Gregory's

(1) Augustine asked how the offerings of the faithful ought to be distributed, and what relation should subsist between a bishop and his clergy. Gregory replied that it was the custom of the Apostolic See to order newly consecrated bishops to divide the revenues of their Churches into four parts—one for the bishop and his household, that he might exercise hospitality and receive strangers; the second for the clergy; the third for the poor; the fourth for the repair of the churches.[1] But, since Augustine was a monk, he ought to live with his clergy and have everything in common with them, after the fashion of the primitive Church. Clerks in minor Orders (*i.e.* below the subdiaconate) might marry and live apart, receiving their stipends separately; but "they must be subject to ecclesiastical rule, and lead a holy life, and give attention to chanting the psalms,[2] and preserve by God's grace their hearts and tongues and bodies pure from every forbidden thing."

(2) Augustine's second question referred to differences of ritual in Churches. "In Gaul he had evidently noticed the number of collects in the Mass, the frequent variations of the Preface, the invocation of the Holy Spirit on the elements, the solemn episcopal blessing pronounced after the breaking of the bread, and before 'the Peace' and the Communion."[3] And when he commenced his ministry in England, the question of the admissibility of such divergences from Roman usage became of practical importance to him, since, while he would

letters, in the register of which it does not occur in the older editions of Gregory's works, but is added at the end of them" (H. and S. iii. p. 32). Further, Bede's omission of the Preface may have misled the scrinarii. It seems that the document was rediscovered in Rome after 736. Still, Bede's copy is undoubtedly the most authentic, and the additions to his text (with the exception, perhaps, of the Preface) are of no authority. For the variations from Bede, consult H. and S. iii. pp. 32, 33.

[1] See above, Vol. I. p. 397 *sqq.*

[2] "Canendis psalmis invigilent," *i.e.* they must know the Divine Service. Gregory always insisted that clergy must pay particular attention to the Psalter. See, for instance, *Epp.* v. 51 (he refuses to ordain John the presbyter who did not know the psalms, "quia haec eum res minus sui profecto habere studium demonstrabat") and *ibid.* xiv. 11 (he orders Rusticus, who "vigilans quidem homo dicitur, sed, quantum asseritur, psalmos ignorat," to be examined, "quantos psalmos minus teneat"). See also above, Vol. I. p. 69, *n.* 1. It was apparently still the custom in many places to chant the psalms from memory without using a book (*Dict. Chr. Ant.* vol. ii. p. 1747).

[3] Bright *Early English Church History* p. 59.

naturally wish to introduce the Roman rite, Queen Bertha and her chaplain would as naturally prefer to retain the Gallican. So in his perplexity he wrote to Gregory: "Seeing that the Faith is one and the same everywhere, why are the customs of the Churches so different? and why is there one mode of celebrating mass in the Roman Church and another in the Churches of Gaul?" Gregory replied that in making arrangements for the English Church, Augustine was not bound to conform entirely to Roman practice. He might select whatever rites and customs seemed to him the best either in the Roman Church, or in the Gallican, or in any other, and from them compile a ritual for the English Christians. "For we ought not to value things on account of places, but places on account of things. Choose, then, from the different Churches such customs as are godly and religious and right, and bind them as it were into a bundle, and establish them in the hearts of the English as their use."[1]

(3) Again, Augustine inquired what should be the punishment for theft from churches. Gregory ruled that the circumstances of the theft should be taken into account, and the penalties graduated accordingly. "There are some who thieve although they have resources of their own, and there are others who are driven into crime by want. Some, therefore, ought to be punished by fines, others with stripes; some more severely, others more leniently." Yet he reminds Augustine that in any case the punishment is remedial, and must be inflicted, not in anger, but in charity. Restitution of the stolen property must be made, but the Church is not to receive back more than the value of such property, or make any profit out of her apparent losses.[2]

[1] For Gregory's own alterations in the Roman rite, see above, Vol. I. p. 265 *sqq*. For the sentiment expressed, compare *Epp*. i. 41: "In una fide nihil officit sanctae ecclesiae consuetudo diversa"; and ix. 26: "Tamen si quid boni vel ipsa (*sc*. ecclesia Constantinoplitana) vel altera ecclesia habet, ego et minores meos, quos ab inlicitis prohibeo, in bono imitari paratus sum. Stultus est enim qui in eo se primum existimat, ut bona quae viderit discere contemnat." On the other hand, Landulphus Senior, in his history of Milan, writes: "Papa Gregorius . . . omnes latinae linguae ecclesias per diversa officia multum discrepantes vidit. Qui tantum . . . ad unitatem Romanae ecclesiae revocavit, dicens . . . unum mysterium totius linguae esse debere latinae" (quoted by Mr. Plummer, ap. Baeda *H. E*. i. 27).

[2] Contrast the first of the laws of Ethelbert concerning the restitution of

(4, 5) In the fourth and fifth replies, Gregory settles some points in connexion with English marriages. In answer to Augustine's queries, he ruled that two brothers might marry two sisters who were not of kin to them, but that the marriage of first cousins should not be allowed, because, although such unions were permitted by the Roman law,[1] yet the offspring of them was unhealthy, and Holy Scripture implicitly condemned them. But, on the principle of introducing restrictions gradually among fresh converts, Gregory was willing for the present to permit marriage between second or third cousins, though this concession was doubtless intended to be only temporary.[2] Marriage with a stepmother[3] or sister-in-law[4] was strictly prohibited. But since such unions were common among the English, those who had contracted them before becoming Christians were not to be excluded from the Holy Communion. New converts, however, were to be warned that these marriages were henceforth unlawful, and if, in spite of this, they contracted them, they were to suffer the penalty of excommunication.

stolen property. "The property of God and of the Church, twelve-fold; a bishop's property, eleven-fold; a priest's property, nine-fold; a deacon's property, six-fold, etc." (H. and S. iii. 42).

[1] *Cod.* v. 4, 19. For the variations of the civil law on this point, and the opinions of Fathers of the Church, consult Bingham, xvi. 11, § 4, and *Dict. Chr. Ant.* "Prohibited Degrees." The marriage of first cousins was condemned by the Council of Agde, 506; of Epaone, 517; of Auvergne, 533; by the Third Council of Orleans, 538; by the Fourth Council of Orleans, 541; by the Second Council of Tours, 567; by the Council of Auxerre, 578; and by others, including even the great Eastern Council in Trullo, 691.

[2] This is distinctly stated in a letter purporting to have been written by Gregory to Felix of Messina (H. and S. iii. 32, 33), quoted by Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 38. This letter, however, is probably spurious. At any rate, Gregory's concession was not long in force in the English Church, since Boniface, writing in 742, says that a Synod of London had condemned marriage in the third degree as "maximum scelus et incestum et horribile flagitium et damnabile piaculum" (H. and S. iii. p. 51). Theodore's *Penitential* decrees: "In quinta generatione coniungantur; quarta, si inventi fuerint, non separentur"; marriages in the second and third degrees were forbidden (H. and S. iii. p. 201). By the time of Lanfranc the prohibition in England had been extended to the seventh degree.

[3] See, for instance, the case of Eadbald (Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 5). "Illicita novercarum coniugia" were among the Scottish abuses reformed by St. Margaret (H. and S. ii. p. 158).

[4] For a list of councils in which such marriage was condemned, see *Dict. Chr. Ant.* "Prohibited Degrees."

(6) Augustine asked whether a bishop might be ordained by a single consecrator, when, owing to the distance, other bishops were unable to be present. Gregory replied that such consecration by a single bishop was irregular, though it was, of course, valid.[1] At present, he said, since Augustine was the only bishop in England, he must necessarily consecrate alone, for bishops were not likely to come from Gaul to assist him. (Gregory here entirely ignores the British bishops.) But when he had ordained his suffragans—whose sees ought not to be planted too far apart—there should be no difficulty in securing the attendance of a sufficient number of bishops, and three or four ought to take part in every consecration. For, just as married people are invited to weddings, that they may share the joy of the bridal pair, so "at that spiritual ordination wherein by a holy mystery a man is wedded to God, there should be present those who can rejoice in the promotion of the new bishop, and can pour forth their united prayers to God for his safe keeping."

(7) Again, Augustine asked what was to be his relation to the bishops of Gaul and Britain. To this question Gregory responded that he had no intention of conferring on him any authority whatsoever over the bishops of Gaul. The metropolitans of Arles had received from his predecessors and himself the pallium, and it would not be right to interfere with the authority thus conferred. If Augustine visited Gaul, he might point out to the archbishop of Arles any abuses he

[1] The Nicene Council, c. 4 ordained that at least three of the comprovincial bishops should participate in the consecration, and several other councils insist on a plurality of consecrators—three being the number usually specified (Bingham, ii. 11, § 4; *Dict. Chr. Ant.* i. p. 223). The intention clearly was to secure the consent of the province. Nevertheless, though such was the rule of the Church, it is clear that the infringement of it did not invalidate a consecration, and that a person consecrated by two bishops, or even by one (for instances, see Bingham, ii. 11, § 5, and *D. C. A.*), was regarded as possessing the episcopal character. Such certainly was the view of Gregory, who speaks of the presence of more than one consecrator only as "valde utilis" as of those "qui testes assistant." It may be noted that consecration by a single bishop was common in the Scotic Churches: witness the case of St. Kentigern or of St. Serf. In allusion to the last, Joannes Maior *De Gest. Scottor.* iii. 2, says: "Ex isto patet quod episcopus in necessitate ab uno episcopo consecratur; et non est de episcopi essentia quod a tribus ordinetur." In the English Church Honorius was consecrated by Paulinus alone (Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 16), Deusdedit by Ithamar (*ibid.* iii. 29).

had noticed, and stir him up to correct them; and Gregory had himself written to the archbishop, bidding him receive Augustine's advice in good part, and join with him in putting down abuses.[1] Thus Augustine might promote a reformation in Gaul by advice, exhortation, and example, but he was not to presume on his own account to exercise any authority over the Gallican bishops. On the other hand, all the British bishops were committed to his care, "that the ignorant may be instructed, the weak strengthened by good advice, the perverse corrected with authority."[2] The wording of this last clause seems to indicate that Gregory had received from Laurentius and Peter an unfavourable account of the British bishops. The provision itself likewise indicates that he had no conception of the independent spirit of the British Church, which, while willing to yield an honorary primacy to the See of Rome, was by no means disposed to submit unresistingly to the jurisdiction of the Pope or his archbishop. If Augustine shared Gregory's delusion that the British bishops would quietly acknowledge the Roman supremacy, he was speedily undeceived.

(8, 9) The remaining questions were concerned with certain regulations of ceremonial purity, and need not be particularly noticed.[3] It is worthy of remark, however, that in discussing the relations which ought to subsist between the sexes, Gregory took occasion to denounce "an evil custom" which some mothers had adopted, "of entrusting their babies to other women to nurse, disdaining to suckle them themselves." He distinctly repudiates the suggestion that wedlock itself is sin, but he holds that the pleasure inseparable from conjugal intercourse, disturbing as it does the tranquillity of the soul, is

[1] *Epp.* xi. 45; Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* i. 28. For the abuses in the Church in Gaul, see the last chapter.

[2] Compare *Epp.* xi. 39.

[3] "Si pregnans mulier debeat baptizari? aut postquam genuerit, post quantum tempus possit ecclesiam intrare? aut etiam, ne morte praeoccupetur, quod genuerit, post quot dies hoc liceat sacri baptismatis sacramenta percipere? aut post quantum temporis huic vir suus possit in carnis copulatione coniungi? aut, si menstrua consuetudine tenetur, an ecclesiam intrare ei liceat, aut sacrae communionis sacramenta percipere? aut vir suae coniugi permixtus, priusquam lavetur aqua, si ecclesiam possit intrare, vel etiam ad mysterium communionis accedere? Si post inlusionem quae per somnium solet accedere, vel corpus Domini quislibet accipere valeat, vel, si sacerdos sit, sacra mysteria celebrare?"

not free from sin. He adds: "Oportet itaque legitimam carnis copulam, ut causa prolis sit, non voluntatis; et carnis commixtio creandorum liberorum sit gratia, non satisfactio vitiorum."

The *Responsa* is certainly a masterly document, bearing evidence alike of the good sense and good feeling and of the statesmanlike ability of the writer. It is the production of a mind of shrewd practical sagacity as well as of lofty spiritual insight, and confirms the high estimate we have otherwise formed of Gregory's qualities as a statesman and a saint. But while the answers of the Pope are in every way admirable, the questions which gave rise to them leave us with a rather poor opinion of the intelligence of the archbishop. We wonder, for instance, how a student of the Scriptures could have thought it necessary to inquire whether a man might marry his stepmother; or what, save foolish arrogance, could have induced Augustine to imagine that he was intended to exercise any jurisdiction over the bishops of Gaul. The questions about the regulations of ceremonial purity betray the scrupulosity and narrowness of a monk, who, in his intercourse with the world, was unable to divest himself of the ideals of the cloister. Many of them are such as any man of sense might easily have determined, and even Gregory, as he waded through the tedious list, seems to have became a little impatient. "I doubt not," he wrote, "that your Fraternity has been asked these questions, and I think I have supplied you with the answers. I suppose you wish to have my written confirmation of what, after all, you could say and think for yourself."

The writing of the letters and the sending of the second band of missionaries brought to a conclusion Gregory's labours for the conversion of the English. Henceforward to the time of his death, some three years later, he seems to have held no communication with Augustine. His share of the work was finished. He had seen the foundations of the Catholic Church laid in the midst of Anglo-Saxon heathenism, he had sent a supply of noble-hearted missionaries to toil at the building of the holy temple, and he had himself with infinite pains drawn up the plan which the builders were to follow. Gregory had done all he could; the rest must be left to time and the zeal of the missionaries themselves. But Englishmen have not

been unmindful of the debt of gratitude which they owe to this great Pope. Already in the beginning of the eighth century he was invoked in England as a saint, and by the Council of Clovesho it was decreed that the festival of "our father Gregory" should be kept as a holiday of obligation.[1] "Our very wakeful shepherd and governor," "our teacher," "our father in God," "our preacher," are among the titles which have been applied to him by the devotion of English churchmen. But perhaps Bede's designation of "apostle" is the best known and the most appropriate. "For we may and ought rightly to call him our apostle, because, whereas he bore the pontifical primacy over all the world, and was placed over the Churches already converted to the true faith, he made our nation, till then given up to idols, a Church of Christ. To others, indeed, he may not be an apostle, but he is to us. For we are the seal of his apostleship in the Lord."[2]

After receiving Gregory's letters, Augustine took steps to establish relations with the British bishops. Through the influence of Ethelbert, a conference was arranged between him and "the bishops and teachers of the nearest province of the Britons" (*i.e.* probably of South Wales), "at a place still called Augustine's Oak, on the borders of the Hwiccas and the West Saxons," possibly somewhere in the neighbourhood of Malmesbury. The meeting must have taken place in the year 602 or 603. Augustine, says Bede, "began with brotherly

[1] Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 368. The author of the *S. Gallen Life* c. 32, writes: "Iste enim sanctus utique per omnem terram tam sanctus habetur, ut semper ab omnibus ubique sanctus Gregorius nominetur. Unde letaniis quibus Dominum pro nostris imploramus excessibus atque innumeris peccatis quibus eum offendimus, sanctum Gregorium nobis in amminiculum vocamus, cum sanctis scilicet apostolis et martyribus, inter quos eum in coelis Christo credimus coniunctum."

[2] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 1. Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 100 calls Gregory "Saxonum gentis apostolus." I may here add a rule, alleged to have been given by Gregory to the English, concerning Ember fasts: "Sunt quattuor ieiunia quattuor temporum anni, id est veris, aestatis, autumni et hiemis. Ieiunium primum in prima hebdomada Quadragesimae; ieiunium secundum in hebdomada post Pentecosten; ieiunium tertium in plena hebdomada ante autumnale aequinoctium; ieiunium quartum in plena hebdomada ante natale Domini. Ieiunium in feria sexta per totum annum nisi a Pascha usque ad Pentecosten, aut si maior festivitas fuerit." This canon is probably spurious. See H. and S. iii. 53. For some fragments of letters attributed to Gregory, also spurious, see *ibid.* 53, 54.

admonition to persuade them to make Catholic peace with himself, and to undertake, in conjunction with him, the work of preaching the gospel to the heathen, for the Lord's sake."[1] But it was felt on both sides that the terms of such "Catholic peace" involved the surrender of those racial customs and usages which were considered by Augustine to be a menace to the unity of the Church. And this act of submission the British clergy were not prepared to make.

The Welsh Church at this time was essentially a monastic Church, its whole organization being built up round the monasteries. Its bishops were members, usually abbats, of monastic establishments, and they seem to have been non-diocesan. Its clergy also were attached to the monasteries, and not strictly parochial. In order to be ordained, a Welshman was obliged to become a member of "the tribe of the saint" (*i.e.* to join a monastery), Orders being part of the tribal rights, and those who belonged to the tribe, but those only, being entitled to them. The churches too were colonies from the great monasteries, built on monastic land, served by monastic clergy, and called after the saint by whom the monastery was founded. In short, the system of Christianity which flourished in Wales was monastic, not diocesan. The land was covered with a network of religious institutions, consisting of some seven or eight principal monasteries with their colonies, and colonies of colonies. And this was the Welsh Church.

Further, the constitution of this monastic Church was essentially tribal. The clan or tribe was its most characteristic feature. "This idea of a tribe," says Mr. Willis Bund,[2] "pervaded each monastery, the whole of the members of which, not only in the monastery itself, but also in all its subordinate houses, were considered to form one family or tribe. . . . The monastic family, the ecclesiastical tribe, began to be spoken of as the tribe of the saint, the members of which tribe were all assumed to be related by descent, either actually or in theory,

[1] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 2. Compare Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 32–35. The *Iolo MSS.* 143, 548, supply a list of seven bishops alleged to have been present at the conference. The sees mentioned are Hereford, Llandaff, Padarn, Bangor, St. Asaph, Wig, and Morganwg. But this list is quite apocryphal, being "obviously the guess of some Welsh antiquary of a much later date." See the criticism of Willis Bund *Celtic Church of Wales* pp. 246, 247.

[2] Willis Bund *ibid.* pp. 178, 179.

from the saint who had received from the pagan chief permission to settle on the lands of the lay tribe." Thus every great monastic establishment was a sort of spiritual clan, in which the abbat was chieftain, the officials represented the heads of the tribal families, and the monks were the tribesmen. All the members of this spiritual clan regarded themselves as related to one another, all lived on common land, and were maintained by common funds, and owed allegiance to a common chief, who was elected when possible from the kindred of the founder of the clan; all, again, as belonging to the clan, had a claim to protection or right of sanctuary, to maintenance and to religious privileges. The tribal idea was still maintained when the great monastery established colonies of its own. The daughter-houses were regarded as closely associated with the mother-house by the tie of relationship. The members of each belonged to the same "tribe of the saint," shared the same privileges, and participated in the same worship. Thus, just as secular Wales consisted of groups of tribesmen clustering round powerful lay chieftains, so ecclesiastical Wales consisted of groups of tribesmen clustering round a few great monasteries founded by important saints. In order to possess any religious rights at all, a Welshman must necessarily belong either to the ecclesiastical tribe itself or to the tribe of the land on which the ecclesiastical tribe was settled. In short, to be a member of the Christian Church in Wales meant simply being connected with one or other of the great monastic clans. The governing principles both in ecclesiastical and secular society were at this period entirely tribal.

This tribal constitution of the Welsh monastic Church accounts for the two following peculiarities. In the first place, each of the great monastic clans was entirely self-governing and independent. That one tribe should acknowledge the authority of another would have been a confession of inferiority. According to the tribal idea, a stranger was invariably regarded as an enemy, and no self-respecting tribe would have submitted to dictation from such a one. Hence the great monastic clans were entirely independent, and subject to the authority of none save their own abbat. There was no common order or common rule. Every member of a clan gave his whole allegiance to his own particular settlement, the

privileges and rights of which he was prepared to defend even with arms against the encroachments of any other settlement. In the second place, the religion of the Welsh monastic clergy was to a great extent merely a profession; it was their business as members of the ecclesiastical clan. We look in vain, therefore, among the Welsh clerics for what are generally considered saintly virtues. Gildas, the Penitentials, the canons of Welsh synods, and the Welsh laws conclusively prove that such virtues were, to say the least, not general. Loyalty to his clan was almost the only virtue of the Welsh cleric. His main object was not to live piously or to spread the Christian doctrines by preaching, but to defend and increase the lands and privileges of the ecclesiastical tribe to which he belonged. Loyalty to his monastery was the first, and almost the last, article in his code of duty.

Thus, speaking generally, we may say that the Celtic Church in Wales consisted of an aggregate of clans centring in a few great monasteries, which were entirely independent of one another, and over which there existed no superior authority. Archbishops, diocesan bishops, and parochial clergy there were none in the sense in which the Latins understood those terms. The bishops and clergy were all members of the monasteries, and (except those of them that happened to be themselves the abbats) were subject to the authority of the heads of the monasteries. The monastery and the clan were the Welsh Church.

We see, then, that the whole constitution of the Church in Wales was totally distinct from that of the Latin. The Welsh monasticism was not the Latin monasticism, the Welsh episcopate was not the Latin episcopate, the Welsh ideals were not the Latin ideals, and the Welsh ecclesiastical aristocracy was utterly opposed to the Latin ecclesiastical imperialism.

Besides these fundamental differences, there were several more superficial divergences in the customs of the two Churches. For instance, the Celtic rules for determining the date of Easter differed from the Roman in the following three particulars. They based their computations on a cycle of 84 years, "which had been supplanted successively at Rome itself by the 532 years' cycle of Victorius of Aquitaine, A.D. 457, and by that of nineteen years of Dionysius Exiguus, A.D. 525,—these changes

being designed to bring the Roman reckoning into harmony with the Alexandrian." They allowed the Easter festival to be celebrated on the 14th day of the moon, if a Sunday, and consequently not later than the 20th day of the moon; whereas the Romans allowed it from the 15th to the 21st days of the moon inclusive. And according to them the earliest date on which Easter Day could fall was March 25th, the latest April 21st; while the Roman limits were March 22nd and April 25th.[1] Again, the British differed from the Roman Church in that they did not "perform the ministry of baptizing fully according to the manner of the Holy and Apostolic Church of Rome." The precise difference is unspecified, and has been conjectured to be the use of single, instead of trine, immersion, or the omission of the chrism or confirmation.[2] Again, the shape of the tonsures differed in the two Churches—the Latin tonsure being a circular crown, while the Celt shaved the whole front of the head from ear to ear, letting the hair hang down behind.[3] There were other points of difference,[4] but these were the principal ones on which the future controversies were to turn.

There is no doubt whatever that Augustine was placed in an exceedingly difficult position. With paganism pure and simple he was able to cope, but with this peculiar form of Welsh Christianity he was at a loss how to deal. He could make nothing of the grim, shaven abbats, whose religion was irrevocably bound up with the tribal system, and whose interests were entirely absorbed in the maintenance and extension of the rights of their clan. In the face of their unconquerable attachment to their ancestral usages, he found

[1] H. and S. i. pp. 152–153; Plummer *Bede* vol. ii. Excursus, p. 348 *sqq.*; Bright *History* p. 86 *sqq.*; *D. C. A.* "Easter"; Stokes *Ireland and the Celtic Church* Lecture viii.

[2] H. and S. i. pp. 153, 154, believe that the reference is to single immersion. But I think this is scarcely probable in view of Gregory's authorization of single immersion in Spain (see above, Vol. I. pp. 411, 412); though it is possible, of course, that Augustine did not know of this authorization. On the other hand, St. Patrick's Epistle to Coroticus mentions the chrism and confirmation: the authenticity of this document, however, is doubtful.

[3] See Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* v. 21; Reeves *Adamnan* p. 350. Gregory of Tours tells us that a Saxon colony at Bayeux used the Celtic tonsure (*Hist. Franc.* x. 9), and a tonsure like the Celtic was condemned in Spain by the Fourth Council of Toledo, 633, c. 41.

[4] H. and S. i. 154, 155.

himself helpless. He might lecture them on "Catholic peace," but such "Catholic peace" could only be obtained by subverting the whole constitution of the Welsh Church and substituting the foreign system of the Latins. He might point out that by following their own traditions they were setting themselves in opposition to "all the Churches throughout the world which are in harmony with one another in Christ"; but such an argument fell pointless on the ears of men whose peculiar pride was their tribal independence. Prayers, exhortations, even a miracle, were alike unavailing. At length Augustine, wearied out, adjourned the discussion, on the understanding that another conference should soon be held, at which a larger number of the British clergy should be present.

The place of the second conference is not mentioned, but we may assume that it was the same as before. According to the tradition known to Bede, seven British bishops attended,[1] together with "several most learned men," especially from the celebrated monastery of Bangor-is-coed (near Chester), then under the government of the abbat Dinoth. A story, which however can scarcely be authentic, relates that, before proceeding to the place of meeting, the British sought out a wise and holy anchoret, and consulted him whether they should abandon the traditions of their Church, as Augustine bade them. His answer was: "If Augustine is a man of God, follow him." "What proof can we have of this?" said they. The hermit replied: "Our Lord says, *Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* If, then, this Augustine is meek and lowly in heart, we may believe that it is the yoke of Christ which he bears himself and which he presents to you; but if he is ungentle and proud, it is clear that he is not from God, and that you should not receive his words." "But how," they asked again, "are we to know this?" "Contrive," was the answer, "that Augustine and his people reach the place of meeting before you. If he rises at your approach, then listen obediently to him, knowing that he is the servant of Christ; but if he despises you and will not rise to greet you, though you are the larger party, then treat him also with contempt."

The advice of the hermit was acted upon. When the British

[1] "There is no trustworthy evidence to show who these bishops were" (H. and S. iii. 41). Cf. Willis Bund *Celtic Church in Wales* pp. 246, 247.

arrived at the place of meeting, Augustine was sitting in his chair, and for some reason, whether to assert his archiepiscopal dignity or because he despised these half-savage, half-pagan Welshmen, he did not rise. The tactless discourtesy enraged the delegates, who condemned him as a proud foreigner, and steadily contradicted everything he said. Augustine made them a speech which was scarcely calculated to conciliate. "Although many of your usages are contrary to ours, and indeed to the usages of the whole Church of God, yet, if you will obey me in these three things—if you will celebrate Easter at the proper time; if, in accordance with the custom of the holy Roman and Apostolic Church, you will complete the ministry of baptism by which we are born again to God; and if you will join us in preaching the Word of God to the English,[1]—we will quietly tolerate your other usages, though contrary to ours." The reply of the British clergy was that they would do none of these things,[2] nor would they have Augustine for their archbishop. "If he will not rise up to greet us now," so they said among themselves, "he will despise us as utterly worthless when we are his subjects." Finding them immovable in their determination, Augustine uttered a stern warning. "If you will not accept peace with brethren," said he, "you will have to accept war from enemies; if you will not preach to the English the way of life, you will suffer the punishment of death at English hands." Years after, when at the battle of Chester numbers of British clergy were ruthlessly butchered by Ethelfrid the Destroyer, the words of Augustine were remembered and acknowledged to be prophetic.[3]

Augustine had failed; the British bishops would have none of him. Stiff Roman monk as he was, he had no notion how he ought to treat his adversaries. He tried to impress them with his dignity, but only succeeded in enraging them. He

[1] It is a peculiarity of the Welsh saints "that they never seemed to have been moved by that missionary spirit which made the Irish saints instrumental in the conversion of Western Europe." See Willis Bund, p. 461; H. and S. i. p. 154; and Plummer's *Bede* ii. 76. Compare also Green *Making of England* p. 229.

[2] For the legendary answer of Dinoth, see H. and S. i. 122.

[3] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 2. Tighernach and *Ann. Camb.* date the battle of Chester 613. The *Sax. Chron.* gives 607, but this is generally admitted to be incorrect.

tried to win them by concessions, but they wished for no concessions from one whose authority they did not recognize. He rebuked them harshly and threatened them, and his threats completed the rupture. Certainly in his dealings with the Welshmen Augustine made many mistakes, yet it is only fair to admit that, where he failed, even the most tactful diplomatist would scarcely have succeeded. Had Gregory himself been there, with all his charm and courtesy, with his skilful method of combining pliancy with firmness, and his readiness to yield in lesser matters if he could carry his main point, even he would not have fared much better. The Romans necessarily asked too much. Their demands implied the overthrow of the Church settlement in Wales, the abrogation of the independence and freedom which that Church had hitherto enjoyed, the annihilation of its most distinctive usages, and the imposition of a foreign yoke which it had never hitherto at any time admitted. Such demands must inevitably have been rejected. The Welsh Christian clung stubbornly to his peculiar form of religion, and resented all attempts to make him accept the religion of Rome. The resistance which Augustine encountered, says Mr. Willis Bund, was due really to the fact "that he preached a Christianity part of which was the total overthrow of the religion that then existed in Wales. It was not so much a matter of doctrine or of Church government, as of the substitution of the Latin ideas of the Christian faith for the strange amalgamation of Christianity and paganism which was the then existing religion."[1] The Welsh, in fact, were really fighting, not a battle for any particular form or ceremony, but the battle of their own Welsh Church, with all its faults, against an alien Church. It was a struggle for freedom from foreign interference.

Disappointed of help from the British clergy, Augustine was left to do the best he could with his Roman priests and monks, supported by the powerful assistance of Ethelbert. Of his own movements from this time onward Bede tells us nothing, and though legends have been preserved of his wanderings in England, and even of a visit to Ireland, they are untrustworthy.[2] We know, however, that, in the year 604, he

[1] Willis Bund *Celtic Church of Wales* p. 143.

[2] Thorn (*X. Script.* 1760) says that "he sowed the seed of God's Word

made some attempt towards carrying out another of Gregory's directions, by consecrating two bishops. The see of Rochester[1] was established for the kingdom of the West Kentings, Justus being ordained bishop, and in this new episcopal city King Ethelbert built and endowed a church which, in memory perhaps of the famous monastery on the Caelian, was dedicated to St. Andrew.[2] For London, the capital of the East Saxons—where Saebert, a nephew of Ethelbert, was king—Mellitus was consecrated missionary-bishop, and in this city also Ethelbert laid the foundation of the cathedral church of St. Paul. Finally, feeling that his end was drawing near, and being loth to leave the infant Church of Canterbury even for an hour without a bishop, Augustine (following, says Bede, the example of St. Peter, who is said to have consecrated Clement as his coadjutor and successor) himself ordained Laurentius as his successor in the metropolitan see.[3] It is noteworthy that, although London was now the seat of a bishopric, Augustine made no attempt to carry out Gregory's wish and fix the archbishopric there. He doubtless realized the unwisdom of transferring the centre of Church organization from the capital of Ethelbert, who was so powerful and so well disposed to promote the Christian cause; and perhaps also he had an affection for the place, which had been the scene of his own struggles and triumphs, so that he could not bear to deprive it of its primatial honours. Whatever the reason may have been, Augustine in this respect deliberately set aside the

everywhere throughout the whole land of the English." Gocelin takes him to York; William of Malmesbury to Cerne in Dorset; the author of the *Vita S. Livini* to Ireland; Thomas of Ely would make him found a church in Cratunden, near Ely.

[1] Malmesbury *Gesta Pont.* p. 33 describes Rochester as "oppidum situ nimium angustum, sed quia in edito locatum, fluvio violentissimo alluitur, hostibus sine periculo non accessibile."

[2] See Ethelbert's charter, H. and S. iii. p. 52.

[3] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 4. This proceeding was uncanonical, although not without precedent. (St. Athanasius, for instance, consecrated his successor Peter five days before his death.) On bishops nominating their own successors, see Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* v. 43; vi. 15. A Roman synod in 465 forbade bishops, "ne successores suos designent"; and the request of Boniface to consecrate his successor was refused by Pope Zacharias, as being "contra omnem ecclesiasticam regulam vel instituta patrum" (*Mon. Mog.* p. 119). For the tradition of Clement's ordination by St. Peter, see *Dict. Chr. Biogr.* "Clemens Romanus," and Plummer's *Bede* ii. p. 82.

Pope's instructions, and henceforth the archbishops remained at Canterbury.

On the 26th of May, probably in the year 605,[1] Augustine died. As the Church of SS. Peter and Paul was not yet finished, his body was laid for a time in ground adjacent. But a few years afterwards it was removed to a side chapel of the church, and over the tomb was placed this epitaph: "Here rests the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being sent hither formerly by the blessed Gregory, Pontiff of the Roman city, and being aided by God with the gift of working miracles, brought King Ethelbert and his people from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having finished the days of his ministry in peace, died on the 26th day of May, in the reign of the same king."[2]

Of late years there has been a tendency, at least in England, to undervalue somewhat Augustine's character and work. This, perhaps, is a natural reaction from the extravagant eulogies which it was formerly the fashion to bestow upon him.[3] Augustine was certainly not a great man. Even as a missionary he cannot be classed in the same category as men like Boniface or Francis Xavier. He had little adaptability, little power of dealing in masterly fashion with unfamiliar modes of life and thought, little originality of conception, little personal charm. He had lived for years in a narrow groove, and he never quite succeeded in escaping from it. He was able to carry out orders, could do the thing that was pointed out for him, but when left to his own resources he was apt to fall into difficulties and to make mistakes. But when we have said this, we have said the worst. If Augustine was a somewhat ordinary man, set to do an extraordinary work in which he sometimes blundered, he was nevertheless a man of sterling goodness, of dauntless courage, of unswerving loyalty to duty, of noble and self-sacrificing life. With dogged perseverance he pursued the path in which his feet were set, never flinching before obstacles or shirking any risk, but braving all things in the cause of Truth. And he

[1] The epitaph in Bede gives the day and month, but not the year. This last cannot have been earlier than 604 (Baeda *H. E.* ii. 3), or later than 610 (*ibid.* ii. 4). Thorn and Elmham both give 605; Florence of Worcester and the *Chronicon S. Crucis*, 604.

[2] Baeda *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 3.

[3] See *e.g.* Gocelin *Vita Aug.* 31 and *passim.*

accomplished much in the short eight years of his ministry. He laid a firm foundation for the English Church; he made the first decisive conquest, which it became the business of his successors to improve and consolidate. Coming to Britain with almost everything against him, ignorant of the people, of their customs, and even of their language, he managed, in spite of all, to plant the standard of Christianity securely in our island. The man who could do such a work must have had qualities, both of heart and head, which it is sheer folly to despise. To minimize the achievements of Augustine, to underrate his character, to dwell persistently on his failings without taking due account of his counterbalancing virtues, is as stupid as it is unjust and ungrateful.

I will close my account of the English mission with the paean of triumph which Gregory could not refrain from interpolating into the midst of his Commentary on Job. "By the shining miracles of His preachers God has brought to the faith even the extremities of the earth. In one faith has He linked the boundaries of the East and the West. Lo! the tongue of Britain, which before could only utter barbarous sounds, has lately learned to make the Alleluia of the Hebrews resound in praise of God. Lo! the ocean, formerly so turbulent, lies calm and submissive at the feet of the saints, and its wild movements, which earthly princes could not control by the sword, are spellbound with the fear of God by a few simple words from the mouth of priests; and he who, when an unbeliever, never dreaded troops of fighting men, now that he believes, fears the tongues of the meek. For by the words he has heard from heaven, and the miracles which shine around him, he receives the strength of the knowledge of God, so that he is afraid to do wrong, and yearns with his whole heart to come to the grace of eternity." [1]

While Gregory was sending missions to convert the pagan English, and writing admonitions to the Frank princes to stamp out heathenism in Gaul, he was not unmindful of the duty of converting the pagans who were to be found nearer home. "We have been informed," so he wrote to the Bishop of Terracina,[2]

[1] *Mor.* xxvii. 21. This passage must have been added to the Commentary after its completion.

[2] *Epp.* viii. 19. For idolatrous worship of trees, see above, p. 62, *n.* 1.

"that certain persons in your diocese worship trees and do many other unlawful acts contrary to the Christian faith; and we are surprised that your Fraternity has delayed inflicting a severe punishment for this. We therefore admonish you now to make a careful search for these people, and when you have learned the truth of the matter, to cause punishment to be inflicted on them, that the wrath of God may be appeased, and other men may learn from the example what chastisement they will have to expect in such a case. We have also written to Maurus the Vice-Comes to help you in this matter, that you may have no excuse for not apprehending them." In the islands especially there seems to have been a considerable number of ignorant rustics who still practised idolatry. Thus the Bishop of Tyndaris in Sicily complained that there were idolaters in his diocese, some of whom he had converted, while the rest were protected "by the patronage of powerful people or by the nature of the places in which they lived." It seems evident that the heathen in question were peasants who dwelt in inaccessible mountain fastnesses, and also that the bishop's missionary efforts had not been confined merely to preaching. Gregory, however, sympathized with his zeal, and wrote to the Praetor of Sicily, begging him to give every assistance.[1] In Corsica, again, pagans were to be found. Some of them had been converted and baptized, but had resumed the practice of idolatry; others resisted all the efforts of the Bishop of Aleria to win them. "You must try," Gregory wrote to the bishop,[2] "to bring them into the fold of Almighty God, by admonishing them, by beseeching, by impressing on them the terrors of the future judgment, by proving to them that they ought not to worship stocks and stones, so that when our Lord comes your Holiness may be found in the number of His saints. For what work can you do more useful and more sublime than to give

[1] *Epp.* iii. 59: "Scripsisti nobis quosdam idolorum cultores atque Angelliorum dogmatis in his in quibus constitutus es partibus inveniri." Nicephorus *Hist.* xviii. c. 49 refers to certain heretics known as Angelitae, who held erroneous views about the Trinity, and were so called after the name of a place in Alexandria where they were accustomed to hold their meetings. Possibly the Angellii are to be identified with this sect: some, however, would make out that worshippers of angels are here referred to (reading "angelorum dogmatis").

[2] *Ibid.* viii. 1.

your mind to the vivifying and gathering in of souls, and to win an immortal gain for God, who has committed to you the office of preacher? We have sent your Fraternity fifty solidi to purchase robes for those to be baptized."

In the island of Sardinia the country people clung to the old heathenism with peculiar tenacity, and Gregory learned with indignation that on the lands of the nobles, and even of the Church itself, there were many peasants who were permitted to continue pagans. To the nobles and proprietors of Sardinia he accordingly sent a strong remonstrance [1]: "Lo! you can see that the end of the world is close at hand, you see how the sword of man and of God rages against us, and yet you, who worship the true God, look on and say nothing, while those committed to you bow down to stones! What, I pray you, will you say in the tremendous judgment, seeing that you have received God's enemies into your power, and yet you disdain to subdue and recall them to Him?" So also to Archbishop Januarius he wrote [2]: "Should I succeed in finding a pagan peasant belonging to any bishop whatever in the island of Sardinia, I shall visit it severely on that bishop." To remedy this shocking state of things Gregory sent two missionaries—Felix, a bishop, and the monk Cyriacus—to preach to the pagans, and he re-established the bishopric of Fausiana, where, owing to the scarcity of clergy, there were many pagans "living like wild beasts and entirely ignorant of God." [3] If the misguided heathen remained deaf to exhortation, Gregory was prepared to coerce them into accepting Christianity. In the case of the heathen "coloni" on Church estates, he ordered that their dues should be increased until they were starved into surrender. "If any peasant should be found so perfidious and obstinate as to refuse to come to God, he must be oppressed with the heaviest and most burdensome payments, until he is compelled by the very pain of the exactions to hasten to the right way." [4] Other pagans were to be otherwise dealt with. "Against idolaters, soothsayers, and diviners," wrote Gregory to Januarius, "we vehemently exhort your Fraternity to be on the watch with pastoral wakefulness, and publicly among the people to preach against the men who

[1] *Epp.* iv. 23. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 26. [3] *Ibid.* iv. 29.

[4] *Ibid.* iv. 26. For the method here recommended, compare *Epp.* v. 7, quoted below, pp. 155, 156.

do such things, and recall them by persuasive exhortation from the pollution of such sacrilege and from temptation of Divine judgment and peril in the present life. If, however, you find them unwilling to amend and correct their ways, we desire you to arrest them with fervent zeal. If they are slaves, chastise them with blows and torments, whereby they may be brought to amendment. But if they are free men, let them be led to penitence by strict confinement, as is suitable, so that they who scorn to listen to words of salvation which reclaim them from the peril of death, may at any rate by bodily torments be brought back to the desired sanity of mind." [1]

Gregory's efforts for the conversion of the natives of Sardinia were to some extent thwarted by the nefarious conduct of the Imperial officials, particularly the Praeses, who, in consideration of a substantial bribe, was willing to wink at the practice of idolatry. What was still more scandalous, those pagans who had formerly paid for a licence to worship their idols, when they became converted were still compelled to make the payments as before. When Gregory's missionaries remonstrated against this injustice, the official calmly replied that he had been obliged to pay so large a sum of money to procure his office, that he could only recoup himself by exactions of this kind. The missionaries then reported the matter to Gregory, who sent a formal complaint to the Empress Constantina.[2]

Besides the peasants scattered over the island, there dwelt in the mountains near Cagliari a barbarous and idolatrous tribe of robbers called the Barbaricini. This people, according to Procopius,[3] were Moors, who had been expelled from Africa by the Vandals, and had settled in Sardinia, where by their lawless violence they had established a reign of terror. They were all heathen with the exception of their chieftain, Hospito, who was a Christian, and to him Gregory wrote, urging him to bring his subjects to the faith, or at least to give every facility for

[1] *Epp.* ix. 204.

[2] *Ibid.* v. 38. See below, pp. 241, 242. If the official here referred to is the Spesindeus who was Praeses in 600, we may conjecture that he altered his ways, for we find Gregory writing to the latter to request him to co-operate with the Bishop of Fausiana in evangelizing the heathen provincials (*ibid.* xi. 12).

[3] Procop. *Bell. Vand.* ii. 13.

preaching to the Roman missionaries, Felix and Cyriacus.[1] Doubtless the rough barbarian was flattered at receiving a communication from the Pope, and was quite willing that his people should be converted. The military successes of Duke Zabardas, the Governor of Sardinia, tended to the same result, since he would only grant peace to the vanquished barbarians on condition of their becoming Christians.[2] The tribe did not, indeed, become converted all at once, but the reports of the missionaries seem to have been satisfactory, and towards the end of his life Gregory learnt with pleasure that "numbers of the barbarians and provincials in Sardinia, by God's grace, were hastening to embrace the Christian faith with the utmost devotion."[3]

In his treatment of the heathen, as well as in his treatment of heretics and schismatics, Gregory was not less intolerant than the rest of his contemporaries. It is true that, in his natural gentleness, he was averse from extreme measures. He was quite willing to try every means—threats, persuasions, exhortations—before resorting to violence. But when these means failed he had no hesitation whatever in setting a persecution afoot. Thus we find him prescribing taxes, stripes, imprisonment, and torture for the obstinate pagans in Sardinia; sending soldiers from Rome to coerce the Istrian schismatics; entreating in urgent terms the officials of Africa to organize a persecution of the Donatists; exhorting Brunichildis and Ethelbert to compel their heathen subjects to adopt the faith of Christ. He never had the least scruple in invoking the assistance of the secular arm for the suppression of the enemies of the Church, and it seemed to him quite natural and justifiable to employ force where persuasion was ineffectual. Such an attitude of intolerance was, of course, characteristic of his age, and would scarcely have called for remark, had not Gregory permitted himself, in a remarkable way, to relax his general principle in favour of the Jews.

At this time the Jews were settled in almost every province of what had once been the Roman Empire—in the East, in Greece and the islands, in Africa, in Italy, in Gaul and Spain, and in parts of Germany. On the whole, they seem to have been fairly prosperous. In Africa they carried on an

[1] *Epp.* iv. 27. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 25. [3] *Ibid.* xi. 12.

extensive slave trade, in Spain they interested themselves in agriculture, at Constantinople and Alexandria they were engaged in great commercial operations, in Gaul they appear to have been rich and powerful. Even in Italy, where they were extremely unpopular, they had been well treated during the period of the Gothic occupation,[1] and the subsequent wars had been to their advantage. Nevertheless, in those countries at least where the Imperial laws remained in force, the Jews were subject to most serious disabilities. They were cruelly taxed, and excluded from all military and civil dignities, though not relieved of the burdens of those dignities. They were forbidden to intermarry with Christians or to purchase Christian slaves. In litigation between Christians, or between Christians and Jews, the testimony of Jews was not admitted. The free power of bequest was denied them. Even in the practice of their religious rites they were fettered, some of their festivals being prohibited, the use of the Mishna being forbidden, and their Rabbis not being allowed to make their own calculations for the date of the Passover. A Jew who insulted or assaulted a Christian was liable to severe penalties, and he who stoned a Christian or endangered his life was burnt alive. Besides all this, the Jews were continually exposed to danger from outbreaks of popular fanaticism, and from the violent missionary aggressions of individual bishops. Nor was the lot of this persecuted people much improved in the countries which no longer owned the authority of the Roman Emperor. In Spain the laws of Reccared outdid in harshness the legislation of Justinian[2]; and in Gaul, though their condition was better than

[1] The *Anonymus Valesii* has a story of certain Jews of Ravenna, who were in the habit of throwing baptized persons into the river, and of making a mockery of the Eucharist. The Christians, in revenge, burnt their synagogues; whereupon the Jews appealed to Theodoric, who ordered that the Christians should pay for their restoration, and that those who had no money to contribute should be flogged through the streets, as a punishment for their violence. Cf. the *Edictum Theodorici*, § 143. The conduct of Theodoric at Ravenna contrasts favourably with that of King Guntram of Burgundy, who refused to restore at the public expense a synagogue at Orleans destroyed by the Christians (Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* viii. 1).

[2] *Epp.* ix. 228: "Praeterea indico, quia crevit de vestro opere in laudibus Dei hoc quod . . . cognovi, quia cum vestra excellentia constitutionem quandam contra Iudaeorum perfidiam dedisset, hi de quibus prolata fuerat rectitudinem vestrae mentis inflectere pecuniarum summam offerendo moliti sunt; quam excellentia vestra contempsit et omnipotentis Dei placere iudicio

elsewhere, they were liable to be compelled to receive baptism at the caprice of a Frankish king,[1] or to be hounded from their homes and estates by too zealous bishops.[2]

It is not a little remarkable that, at a time when the hand of every man was against them, when any ardent prelate felt himself safe in attacking them, when the secular powers, if they did not actually join in the persecution, at least rarely took steps to prevent it, the Jews found a resolute champion and defender in Pope Gregory the Great. For some reason or other the Pope steadily set his face against a persecution of the Jews, and refused to permit any violation of their legal rights or any attempt at forcible proselytism. Thus when Jews suffered from an injury, they got into a habit of appealing to Rome, and if their complaint was reasonable, they were sure of obtaining redress at the hands of the Pope. The following letter to the Bishops of Arles and Marseilles well illustrates the attitude which Gregory took up on this question[3]:—

"Several persons of the Jewish religion, living in this province, and travelling from time to time on business to Marseilles and the adjacent districts, have informed us that many Jews settled in those parts have been brought to the baptismal font not so much by preaching as by force. I believe, indeed, that the intention in this is praiseworthy, and I acknowledge that it proceeds from love of our Lord. But unless that intention be accompanied by a corresponding influence of Holy Scripture, I fear that the act will bring you no reward hereafter, and that the result in some cases will be the loss of the very souls we wish to save—which God forbid! For when any one is led to the baptismal font, not by the sweetness of instruction, but by compulsion, if he returns to his former superstition he perishes the more grievously from the very

requirens auro innocentiam praetulit." Hartmann refers to *L. Wisig.* xii. 2, 12; Concil. Tolet. iii. c. 14; and A. Helfferich *Entstehung u. Gesch. d. Westgothenrechts* p. 41 *sqq.*

[1] Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* vi. 17. For murder of Jews, see also *ibid.* vii. 23. Compare the curious interview of Chilperic with Priscus, *ibid.* vi. 5.

[2] Greg. Tur. *H. F.* v. 11. Bishop Avitus said to the Jews: "Vi ego vos confiteri Dei Filium non impello, sed tamen praedico, et salem scientiae vestris pectoribus trado . . . Ideoque si vultis credere ut ego, estote unus grex, custode me posito; sin vero aliud, abscedite a loco." More than five hundred were baptized.

[3] *Epp.* i. 45.

cause which seemed to be for him the beginning of a new life. I therefore beg your Fraternity to preach frequently to these persons, and to appeal to them in such a manner that the kindness of the teacher more than anything else may make them desire to change their former mode of life. In this way our wishes will be rightly carried out, and the mind of the convert will not return to his vomit again. They should be addressed with such words as may burn away the thorns of error and illuminate the darkness of their minds, that so your Fraternity may hereafter receive a reward for your frequent exhortation, and may bring to the regeneration of the new life as many of them as God shall give you."

We have several other letters written by Gregory on behalf of injured Jews. Those at Terracina, for instance, complained that the bishop had turned them out of their synagogue, on the pretext that the sound of their singing was audible in the church; whereupon Gregory ordered that another building within the city walls should be given to them for worship. "We will not have the Hebrews oppressed and afflicted unreasonably. According to the liberty of action justly granted them by the Roman law, let them manage their own affairs as they think best, and let no man hinder them."[1] So also Bishop Victor of Palermo, who had seized the synagogue and hospitals belonging to the Jews in his episcopal city, and, to prevent all possibility of restitution, had consecrated them, was ordered by Gregory to pay the full value of the land and buildings, and to restore the books and ornaments which had been carried off; "for just as these people ought not to be allowed to do anything in their synagogues but what the law permits, so neither should any injury or loss be inflicted on them contrary to justice and equity."[2] Another complaint came from the Hebrews of Sardinia. It seems that a newly converted Jew, named Peter, had on Easter Day, the morrow of his baptism, broken into the synagogue and deposited there "a picture of the Mother of our Lord and God, a holy cross, and the white baptismal robe which he had put on when he rose from the font." In consequence of this, the Jews could not use their synagogue, and the Imperial officials did not venture to remove the Christian emblems, while the Archbishop of Cagliari contented himself

[1] *Epp.* ii. 6. [2] *Ibid.* ix. 38; cf. viii. 25.

with expressing disapprobation of Peter's conduct. Gregory wrote at once to Januarius: "We charge you to remove from the synagogue the picture and cross, for while the laws do not allow the Jews to erect a new synagogue, they do allow them to keep the old ones undisturbed."[1] Again, he wrote to the Bishop of Terracina: "Those who differ from the Christian religion must be won to the unity of the faith by gentleness, by kindness, by admonition, by exhortation, lest we repel by threats and ill treatment those who might have been allured to the faith by the charm of instruction and the anticipated fear of the coming Judge. It is more desirable that they should assemble with kindly feelings to hear from you the Word of God, than that they should tremble at the immoderate exercise of your severity."[2] So also to the Bishop of Naples: "Those who really desire to win to the true faith such as are strangers to the Christian religion, should endeavour to effect their purpose by kindly words, not by harsh actions, lest ill treatment should repel those whom just reasoning might have attracted. Those who act otherwise, and under this pretext wish to restrain the Jews from observing the customary rites of their religion, are clearly acting for themselves rather than for God. Do not in future, therefore, allow the Jews to be molested in the performance of their services. Let them have full liberty to observe and keep all their festivals and holy days, as both they and their fathers have done for so long."[3]

Gregory's own method of conversion by persuasion is curiously exemplified in a letter to his agent on the Papal estates in Sicily[4]: "I have often charged your Affection to take vigorous proceedings against the Manichaeans who are on our estates, and to recall them to the Catholic faith. If you have time, inquire into the matter carefully yourself. If you are too much occupied for that, employ some one else to do it for you. I am also informed that there are on our estates Hebrews who obstinately refuse to be converted. I think it well that you should send letters to all the estates on which they are living, expressly promising them from me a certain reduction of rents in the case of any one who is converted to the true God, our Lord Jesus Christ. And I wish it to be managed in

[1] *Epp.* ix. 195.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 34.
[3] *Ibid.* xiii. 15.
[4] *Ibid.* v. 7.

this way: If the amount to be paid by the person converted is one solidus, one-third of it should be taken off; if three or four solidi, then let one solidus be remitted. If he has more than this to pay, the allowance should be made in the same proportion, or in such proportion as your Affection may think fit, so that the burden of the person converted may be lightened without the interests of the Church suffering too heavy a loss. We are not acting unprofitably in bringing them to Christ through the hope of having their rents reduced. For even if they themselves come with little faith, there will certainly be more faith in their children who are baptized, so that if we do not gain them, we shall gain their children. Therefore any reduction of rent made for Christ's sake is not to be considered a loss."[1] Gregory's bribe was more effectual than violence, and a number of Jews at Girgenti expressed their willingness to become Christians. On account of the pestilence that was raging, Gregory ordered that those who were anxious to be baptized before the ordinary Easter[2] baptism, might receive it on any notable festival which occurred after the lapse of forty days, which were to be spent in penitence and fasting. The poor among them were to be supplied with baptismal robes at the expense of the Roman Church.[3]

But while, on the one hand, Gregory would not sanction any persecution of the Jews, or encroachment on their legal privileges, yet, on the other hand, he was equally resolute to prevent the Jews themselves from exceeding the rights guaranteed them by Imperial law. When any such excesses were committed, he was prompt to require punishment. Thus we find him requesting

[1] Gregory ordered that in the case of heathen coloni on Church estates who persisted in their heathenism, the opposite method should be tried, *i.e.* of increasing the rents. See *Epp.* iv. 26, quoted above, p. 149.

[2] Solemn baptism was at this time limited in the West to two days—*i.e.* Easter and Pentecost. The Eastern Church allowed it on the Epiphany, but the Bishops of Rome, from the fourth century onwards, aimed at confining its administration to the seasons of Easter and Pentecost, *i.e.* to the exclusion of the Epiphany. So Siricius (Labbe, ii. 1018), Leo I (Labbe, iii. 1297 *sqq.*), and others. See the note of the Benedictine editors to *Epp.* viii. 23. Under exceptional circumstances, however, and when there was reason for believing that the candidates for baptism had received an adequate preparation, this rule was relaxed, as here. Augustine baptized a large number of English on Christmas Day (*Epp.* viii. 29).

[3] *Epp.* viii. 23. On the white baptismal robes, see Plummer's *Bede* ii. p. 280; Du Cange "Baptismus." Gregory refers to them, *Epp.* v. 17; viii. 1.

the Praetor of Sicily "to inflict without delay the severest corporal punishment" on a Jew named Nasas, who, according to Gregory's information, had "erected an altar to the blessed Elias, and deceived many Christians, impiously inducing them to worship there"; and had also "bought Christian slaves, and employed them on his own service and for his own advantage."[1] With respect to the last offence, it should be mentioned that the Roman law prohibited Jews from possessing Christian slaves,[2] and even non-Christian slaves of Jews, if at any time they were converted, might at once claim their liberty. These arrangements Gregory upheld,[3] directing that in such cases, if the slaves fled to the churches, they were to be protected by the bishops, and under no pretext were they to be restored to their masters, or any money paid for their redemption.[4] If, however, any Christians had been long employed on land belonging to Jews, they might continue to cultivate it as before, not indeed as slaves, but as "coloni," paying a fixed rent, but not being liable to other requisitions.[5] In the case of slaves brought by Jews from foreign parts for sale, Gregory ordered that, if they were Christians, they must be sold within forty days, if pagans who afterwards desired to become Christians, they must be sold within three months. If in either case the sale was delayed beyond these limits, the slave became free.[6] It seems that the traffic in Christian slaves brought from Gaul was particularly scandalous, and Gregory at one time contemplated taking the extreme measure of interdicting it altogether. But an influential Jew named Basilius, with several others, managed to pacify him, pointing out that it was only

[1] *Epp.* iii. 37.

[2] *Cod.* i. 10. Eusebius (*V. Constantini*, iv. 27) says that Constantine forbade Jews to have Christian slaves. So also *Leg. Wisig.* xi. 2, 12.

[3] *Epp.* ii. 6; iii. 37; iv. 9, 21; vii. 21; viii. 21; ix. 104, 213, 215.

[4] *Epp.* iv. 9: "Quilibet Iudaeorum servus ad venerabilia loca fidei causa confugerit, nullatenus eum patiamini preiudicium sustinere. Sed sive olim christianus, sive nunc fuerit baptizatus, sine ullo pauperum damno religioso ecclesiasticae pietatis patrocinio in libertatem modis omnibus defendatur."

[5] *Epp.* iv. 21: "Ad colenda quae consueverant rura permaneant, pensiones praedictis viris praebeant, cuncta quae de colonis vel originariis iura praecipiunt peragant. Nihil eis extra haec oneris amplius indicatur."

[6] *Epp.* vi. 29; ix. 104. Gregory, however, made allowance if the sale was delayed beyond the specified time on account of the slave's falling ill, "quia rem quae culpa caret ad damnum vocari non convenit."

by accident that Christian slaves were bought, and explaining that the authorities recognized the traffic.[1] Gregory, however, though he relinquished his project, sent a strong protest to the kings of the Franks and to Queen Brunichildis.[2] "We are amazed that in your kingdom Jews are permitted to possess Christian slaves. For what are Christians but members of Christ's Body, who, as we all know, is their Head? Is it not most inconsistent to honour the Head, and allow the members to be trampled on by His enemies? We entreat you to expel this wicked scandal from your dominions. So will you show yourselves true worshippers of God, if you deliver His faithful servants from the hands of their adversaries." Besides owning Christian slaves, it is clear from Gregory's letters that the Jews were sometimes guilty of other illegal offences, *e.g.* compelling their pagan slaves to be circumcised,[3] or buying up the plate and furniture of devastated churches.[4] Such illegalities, when committed, were punished by Gregory, who, in all his dealings with the Jews, invariably insisted on a strict observance of the law.

In speaking of Gregory's missionary work I have, as is natural, dwelt particularly on the history of the English mission, and on the conversion of the Barbaricini and other pagans in the islands and in Italy. It must not be forgotten, however, that the spread of Catholic Christianity among the Lombards is attributable in great measure to Gregory's influence; nor should I here pass over without mention his efforts to uproot paganism in Gaul, Donatism in Africa, and the Schism of the Three Chapters in Istria and Northern Italy. Of all the early Popes, there was none who so exerted himself to spread the Catholic faith throughout the countries subject to the influence of the Apostolic See[5]; and of all the early Popes

[1] *Epp.* ix. 104.
[2] *Ibid.* ix. 213, 215.
[3] *Ibid.* vi. 30.
[4] *Ibid.* i. 66.
[5] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iii. 1: "Iam Ligures, Venetos, Iberos aliosque a schismate sub libello confessos, Chalcedonensem synodum venerari compellens, ad unitatem sanctae ecclesiae revocarat. Iam Barbaricinos, Sardos et Campaniae rusticos tam praedicationibus, quam verberibus emendatos, a paganizandi vanitate removerat. Iam Donatistarum haeresim penes Africam, Manichaeorum penes Siciliam, Arianorum penes Hispaniam, Agnoetarum vero penes Alexandriam, scriptorum suorum validissimis auctoritatibus importunissimisque legationibus, Domino suffragante, a corpore totius sanctae matris ecclesiae sequestrarat."

there is none whose pontificate was distinguished by more remarkable triumphs for the faith. Gregory will always be remembered as a great organizer of missionary enterprises for the conversion of heathen and heretics. The successes that he met with shed a few bright gleams of comfort on the otherwise dreary struggle in which he was continually engaged. The conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, particularly, was perhaps to him the happiest incident of his whole pontificate: it is certainly not the least of all the causes which have contributed to perpetuate his name and fame.

CHAPTER IX

GREGORY AND MONASTICISM

BEFORE the sixth century the monastic movement had made no great headway in Italy. Athanasius, indeed, and Jerome and Paulinus had interpreted the principles of the monastic life, and their exposition had been received with a certain amount of enthusiasm. But the system thus introduced had not yet taken deep root in the life of the people, nor had it yet blossomed forth in great names or famous institutions. Hitherto there had arisen in Italy no great monastic legislator like Pachomius in Egypt, Basil in Asia Minor, Augustine in Africa, or Cassian in Gaul; no monastery had been erected on Italian soil renowned like those of Tabennae, Marmoutier, or Lerins; no eloquent defence of monasticism save the *De Virginitate* of Ambrose, no clear presentment of its principles had emanated from the pen of an Italian. While in the East and in Gaul most of the celebrated bishops and doctors were connected in some way with the movement, in Italy the monks had not risen to eminence in the Church, and none had mounted into the chair of the Apostle. Nor need these facts surprise us. In Italy, more than in any other country of Europe, the old idea of duty to the State, the old ambitions and attractions of public life, retained their hold on the minds of the best men. In some form or other the ancient Roman belief in the greatness of Rome still swayed the imagination and exacted devotion. The old families still clung tenaciously to their traditional connexion with the administration. And when at length there ceased to be any scope for political activity, they endeavoured to pursue a kindred career in the government of the Church. Men of affairs as they were, they naturally sought for offices, secular or ecclesiastical,

which would afford them opportunities for exercising their administrative talents, and they looked with disgust on the placid life of the cloister as a kind of living burial. To the proud descendants of the Scipios, to the Marcelli and Anicii, the self-effacement of the monastery seemed mean and degrading. And though we do meet with a few cases of patricians who found themselves driven by some inward compulsion to exchange their place in the Senate for the cell of the monk, yet such instances of devotion were comparatively rare. The most celebrated of Jerome's converts were women, and the enthusiastic eloquence of Ambrose was most persuasive with the daughters of Milan.

In the sixth century, however, all this was altered, chiefly through the exertions of three great men—Benedict, Cassiodorus, and Gregory—who gave to Italian monasticism a new tone and purpose, as well as an organization distinctly Western and appropriate to the character of Western peoples.

(1) Benedict was at once the type and the teacher of pure monasticism, moral and contemplative. A recluse from his boyhood, he remained throughout his life singularly free from the cares and ambitions of the world. For nearly fifty years he seems never to have left his mountain fastnesses of Subiaco or Monte Cassino, to tarry in cities or adventure his peace among the haunts of men. He took no part in the political struggles or in the ecclesiastical affairs of the time. Alike during the peaceful reign of Theodoric and amid the later tragedies of the Gothic War, he remained apart in his serene and solemn isolation, totally absorbed in his great life-work, the task of training himself and others, by prayer and abstinence and manual labour, by humility, charity, and obedience, for communion with God both in this world and the next. This saintly founder had no ambition that his monasteries should become famous as schools of secular learning, or homes of extraordinary asceticism, or seminaries of doctors and bishops. It was no part of his design that his spiritual descendants should make a figure in the world as authors or statesmen, as preservers of pagan literature, as pioneers of civilization, as revivers of agriculture, as builders of bridges and castles and cathedrals. These things followed; but Benedict took no thought of them. His sole interest was the moral and spiritual training of his disciples.

And it was just this singleness of purpose, this lifelong devotion to a principle, this undisturbed study of the strength and weakness of the monastic life, that pre-eminently fitted Benedict to become its legislator, the real founder of Western monasticism. From his heart, said Urban the Second, as from the fountain-head of Paradise, there sprang and issued "monastici ordinis religio."

The earliest biography of the greatest of monastic founders has been written for us by the first and greatest of monastic Popes, Gregory himself. It is a charming little treatise in thirty-eight chapters, written in very simple style, and describing, without circumlocution or needless comment, the outline and main incidents of the saint's life. It is well worthy of its place among the best of hagiographies.[1]

Benedict was born about the year 480, in what is now the little manufacturing town of Norcia, nestling among the Apennines at the western base of the snow-capped Monti Sibillini, close to the sources of the river Nar. The little city, hiding in its secluded valley and still surrounded by ancient walls, is the Roman municipium of Nursia—the "frigida Nursia" of Virgil—and is known to fame as the birthplace of the Spanish hero Sertorius, and of Vespasia Pollia, mother of a Roman Emperor. But its chief claim to distinction is its association with the great saint whose statue now adorns the market-place,—the patriarch of Western monasticism, "gratia Benedictus et nomine." According to tradition, Benedict's father was one Euproprius, a member of the Anician house, and his mother's name was Abundantia. But Gregory says only that his parentage was noble. His character is represented as from the first uncommon. "From his very childhood he carried the heart of an old man. His demeanour surpassed his years.

[1] Respecting his authorities, Gregory writes: "I have not attained unto all that Benedict did, but the few things which I here set down were related to me by four of his disciples, namely, Constantine, a very reverend man who succeeded him in the government of the monastery (at Monte Cassino); Valentinian, who for many years bore rule in the monastery of the Lateran; Simplicius, who was third superior of that congregation after him; and Honoratus, who yet governs the monastery which he first inhabited (Subiaco)" (*Dial.* ii. Proleg.). Besides these sources of information, Gregory learnt some further details from one Anthony "vir illustris" (*ibid.* ii. 26), from Peregrinus a disciple (*ibid.* ii. 27), and from Exhilaratus a monk of Gregory's own monastery on the Caelian (*ibid.* ii. 18).

He yielded himself to no pleasures, but, living here upon earth, he despised the world and its glory at the very time when he might most freely have enjoyed it."

Benedict did not remain long at Nursia. According to the fashion of the period, at an early age he was sent to Rome to be educated. Learning, however, had no attractions for this youthful saint, and the vices of the capital filled him with horror. He determined to abandon science and society, and to devote himself to a solitary life of communion with God. So when he was about fifteen years old—pathetically young—he slipped away one day from the wicked city, and set out, "skilfully ignorant and wisely unlearned," in quest of some "desert" which might serve as the scene of his devotion.[1]

After a short sojourn at Affile, a little village some thirty miles from Rome—where he wrought his first miracle, and restored intact a broken sieve—he came to Subiaco. It was a steep valley among the hills, in the ancient territory of the Aequi, a little below the three artificial lakes formed by the Anio. Here Nero once had built a villa and laid out beautiful gardens and terraces. But the superstitious Emperor had conceived a terror of the spot where he had narrowly escaped being struck by lightning; so that the villa and gardens had been abandoned and had fallen into decay, and by the time of Benedict's advent the place must have been sufficiently wild to justify Gregory's description of it as "a desert." Amid these precipitous cliffs, then, and by the cold waters of the descending stream, the boy-saint took up his abode, and entered in grim earnest on the solitary life.

He had a friend named Romanus, who belonged to a monastery situated on the high ground overlooking the river. This man, falling in with Benedict, gave him a monk's frock, and pointed out to him a little cave at the foot of the hill on which his own monastery was built. Further, on stated days, he would steal from his cell, with bread saved from his own allowance, which he would lower down the cliff to Benedict by a long cord. Attached to the cord was a bell, the tinkle of which against the rocks apprised the saint that his provision was at hand. One day, Gregory tells us, the devil, in spite, threw a stone and broke the bell. Nevertheless, Romanus

[1] *Dial.* ii. Proleg.

continued his pious ministrations in the best manner he was able.

After a while Romanus died, and the occasional loaf travelled no longer down the face of the cliff. But Benedict's necessities continued to be provided for. Some shepherds, wandering through the valley, espied him among the bushes, and at first mistook him for some wild animal. When they learnt their mistake, however, they began to revere him as a saint, and spread abroad the report of him throughout the district. From this time the country folk resorted to him in large numbers, and, while they listened to his preaching, took care that he should not suffer want.[1]

For some years Benedict continued his solitary discipline of prayer and abstinence. He was the victim of the usual diabolical irritations and temptations with which the literature of monasticism has made us so familiar. On one occasion the devil, in the form of a black bird, kept flapping about his face, until he was driven away by the sign of the cross. Another time he was assailed by a great carnal temptation. The form of a fair woman whom he had once seen continually recurred to his imagination, and so inflamed his passions that he was on the point of quitting for ever his wilderness and his vocation. With a final effort at self-control, however, the saint tore off his dress of skins, and flung himself naked into a clump of briars and nettles. The physical pain expelled for ever the torment of desire, and "after this time, as he himself related to his disciples, he was entirely free from the like temptation."[2] The story has a beautiful sequel. Seven centuries later, perhaps in the year 1218, St. Francis of Assisi visited the Sagro Speco at Subiaco, and, prostrating himself before the briar thicket, he planted there two rose trees. The roses of St. Francis have outlived St. Benedict's thorns, and still in the summer days the garden of the monastery is fragrant in every corner with the perfume of their blossoms.

One unpleasant interruption broke the holy calm of Benedict's retirement. The monks of a neighbouring monastery—most probably that of Vicovaro, on the right bank of the Anio,—importuned him to become their abbat. Benedict, who knew something of their evil life, for long refused, alleging that he

[1] *Dial.* ii. 1. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 2.

and they could never agree together; at last, however, he yielded to their persistent prayers. Unfortunately his forebodings were soon realized. The monks, perverse and loose of life, revolted against the discipline of the Master of the Rule, and, finding they could not regain their freedom in any other way, attempted to poison him in a glass of wine. Then Benedict said to them: "Almighty God in His mercy forgive you, brethren. Why have you thus dealt with me? Did I not tell you before that my manner of life and yours would not agree? Go, seek a superior to your own liking; for you can no longer have me with you." So the saint returned to the solitude of Subiaco, and "lived there by himself in the sight of Him who seeth all things."

But Benedict was not to have his solitude to himself much longer. His fame had spread, and his name was uttered even in the streets of Rome. High and noble personages began to arrive at Subiaco, bringing their sons to entrust to Benedict's protection. Thither, about 523, came Equitius, with his boy Maurus; thither also came Tertullus the Senator, leading little Placidus, then only seven or eight years old. Other devotees assembled, for whom it was necessary to provide some habitation. Hence there were built twelve small monasteries, each with twelve monks and a superior. The rest of the disciples, the chosen of the flock, remained in close attendance on the saint himself.[1]

About the year 528 the shadow of persecution dimmed the brightness of the life at Subiaco. The priests of Vicovaro, especially one named Florentius, became jealous of Benedict, whose preaching no doubt drew away their congregation, to the injury alike of their vanity and their interests. Florentius determined by any means to free himself of his rival. He is said to have even tried to kill Benedict by means of a poisoned loaf, and, when this device failed, to have sent naked hetaerae to play in the monastery garden. Partly to escape this annoyance, partly to secure for himself more leisure, partly perhaps because he felt that the valley among the hills was too narrow and cramped to become the head-quarters of a world-wide movement, Benedict determined to take a few monks with him and depart. The twelve small monasteries,

[1] *Dial.* ii. 3.

the lakes of Nero, the deep wild gorge of the Anio, the cave which to Petrarch seemed the very "Gate of Paradise," were left behind for ever, and about the year 529 Benedict with his picked companions turned their faces southward in search of another home. They had scarcely gone ten miles when they were overtaken by a message from Maurus: "Return, for the priest who persecuted you is dead." But Benedict passed on.[1]

Fifty miles away, on the borders of Campania, there stood the ruins of the Roman municipium of Cassinum, situated on the base and side of a lofty, isolated hill, which afforded from its summit a magnificent view southward of winding Liris and verdant plain, "home of the nymphs." At its foot was a ruined amphitheatre, and on the top, in the place of the ancient citadel, stood a grove-enclosed temple of Apollo, in which, despite Imperial and Gothic laws, the rustics still performed their pagan rites. It was on this hill of Monte Cassino—the true monastic Sinai—that Benedict founded his new monastery. He began, of course, by abolishing the pagan worship. The idol and altar of Far-darting Apollo were cast down, and the groves were set on fire; then, on the site of the heathen temple, was laid the foundation of the oratory of St. Martin, and where the ancient altar once had rested a chapel was built to St. John. Close by rose the monastery, the mother-house of monks, the place which was destined to become, next after Rome, the most reverenced spot in Italy, and to which generations of men turned longingly as to their spiritual home.[2] An old tradition yet points out the spot where the great founder kneeled to pray before he laid the first stone.

The life of Benedict at Monte Cassino, covering a period of some fifteen years, is doubtful and obscure, dimly discernible through a haze of legend. We catch occasional glimpses of the saint, now visiting the brethren as they work at building, or in kitchen, or in field, now praying in his cell, now reading quietly in the cloister, now dispensing hospitality to his guests,

[1] *Dial.* ii. 8. Respecting the journey to Monte Cassino, Paul. Diac. *H. L.* i. 26 calls attention to a legend given in the poem of Mark the Monk (ll. 33, 34, 43, 44), to the effect that Benedict was led by two angels and accompanied by three ravens.

[2] *Dial.* ii. 8.

now absorbed in strange visions or contending with the powers of darkness which to him appeared embodied, but always tirelessly engaged watching over the welfare of the monastery and its inmates. Under his wise government the barren hill became fruitful with gardens and orchards and harvest-fields,[1] and the number of the monks increased from year to year. Men of every class and condition—Roman senators, Goths, peasants, slaves, high officials—came to put themselves under his direction, or entrusted their sons to his care. The country-people of Campania, towards whom his charity was unfailing, loved him and looked upon him as their guardian and protector. Bishops, clergymen, and laymen came to visit and converse with him, appealed to him in their need, and sent him presents. Even fierce Goths grew gentle and humble in his presence, and Totila himself, we are told, after his interview with Benedict, became "less cruel." His quiet influence for good was felt like the sunshine. With him alone, in this chaotic and most miserable age, were restfulness and order and quietness to be found. On his lofty hill, remote from wars and distractions, from political cabals and ecclesiastical intrigues, he shed around him an unruffled calm—the peace of a great soul communing with God. Long after his death, an Archbishop of Salerno, who had himself been trained at Monte Cassino, bestowed on him the well-deserved title, "Fundator placidae quietis."

During these years, as I said, we catch but glimpses of the majestic figure of the monk. He moves, as it were, in an atmosphere thick with the incense offered by admirers. The real man is to a great extent lost sight of behind the veiling mist of legend. These stories no doubt have become familiar to every one. We may read them at length in the pleasant pages of Gregory. We may see them starting into shape and colour in the frescoes of Zingaro, of Signorelli and Sodoma. Or we may hear them in corrupted form from the lips of modern Italian peasants, who will point out the exact spots where Benedict routed the devil or healed a man of leprosy. But, after all, the wide and familiar currency of a legend is no guarantee of its truth.[2]

[1] Marcus Monachus *Carmen de S. Benedicto* 57-62.

[2] It is suspicious that many of the recorded wonders exhibit striking analogies with the Bible miracles. Gregory himself noticed this (*Dial.* ii. 8). The miracles of Elijah and Elisha in particular seem to have furnished

The closing scenes of the hero's life are worthy of more special notice. A few months before his death—in the year 543 or 544—Benedict lost his dearly loved twin-sister, Scholastica, who, imitating the example of the female relatives of other early monks,[1] had devoted herself to the religious life, first at Subiaco and afterwards at Monte Cassino. Here, it is supposed, she lived in the convent of Plumbariola, about a mile and a half from her brother's home, and from this abode she issued once a year to meet Benedict in "a house not far from the gate, within the territory of his monastery." Some details of their last interview have been preserved by Gregory. "After they had spent the whole day in praise of God and pious discourse, as the evening drew on they took their meal together. And while they were yet sitting at table, protracting the time with holy conversation, the religious woman, his sister, entreated Benedict, saying, 'I beseech you, leave me not this night, but let us talk till morning of the joys of the heavenly life.' But Benedict answered, 'What is this you say, my sister? By no means can I remain away from my monastery.' At this time the sky was clear, and not a cloud was to be seen. Then the holy woman, hearing her brother's refusal, clasped her hands together on the table, and, bowing her head upon them, prayed to Almighty God. And, as she raised her head again, there commenced such violent lightning and thunder, with such abundance of rain, that neither the venerable Benedict nor his brethren were able to set foot out of doors. Then the man of God, perceiving that, by reason of the thunder and lightning and the continual downpour of rain, he could not possibly return to his monastery, was sad, and began to complain, saying, 'God Almighty forgive you, sister; what is this you have done?' To whom she replied, 'I prayed you to stay, and you would not hear me; so I prayed to Almighty God, and He has heard me. Now therefore, if you can, go forth to the monastery and leave me.' But he could not go, and was forced to stay against his will."[2]

suggestions to the reporters of Benedict's acts (*Dial.* ii. 6, 8, 13, 27, 29, 32). For a criticism of Gregory's miracle-stories, see above, Vol. I. p. 337 *sqq.*

[1] The sisters of Anthony, Pachomius, Ambrose, Augustine, Caesarius, and Romanus, the mother of Theodore, and the wife of Ammon, are all alleged to have devoted themselves to the religious life.

[2] *Dial.* ii. 33.

Three days later Scholastica died, and shortly afterwards Benedict was aware that his own strength was failing, and he began to prophesy to his disciples that his departure was at hand. A week before his death he caused his grave in the oratory of St. John, wherein his sister's body had been already laid, to be opened. Immediately after he fell into a fever, and his strength ebbed rapidly. On the last day he had himself carried into the oratory, where he received the Viaticum. Then, supported by his disciples, he struggled to his feet, and, lifting up his hands to heaven, began to pray. And thus he died. On the same day two monks beheld in a vision a path spread with carpets, and illumined with innumerable lights, stretching in an easterly direction from Benedict's cell to the sky, and they heard a voice which cried, "This is the way by which Benedict, the beloved of the Lord, ascended."[1]

Such, in brief, is the story of Benedict's life, as told by Gregory. It is no doubt a life less stirring and eventful, less full of interesting and thrilling incident, than those of some other monastic heroes—of Bernard of Clairvaux or Francis of Assisi. But in its historical importance it is inferior to none. Benedict remains for all time the Father of Western Monachism. He adapted a system, still essentially Eastern, to Western conditions, he gave it coherence, stability, organization. He redeemed the cloister from degenerating into a nursery of ineffectual dreamers and ascetics, and made it a school of useful workers, whose ideal was, not merely to feel and suffer, but to do some good in their day and generation. He made monasticism, in short, a real refuge for society and a solid bulwark of the Church. It is not without reason that his disciples, penetrating into all countries with the precious Rule in their hands, were wont to paint upon the walls of their pleasant convents a portrait of their great lawgiver, holding an open book, and with these words for motto: "Ausculta verba magistri."

(2) The second of those who influenced the development of monachism in Italy was Cassiodorus.[2] Some four or five years before Benedict's death, the pedantic old politician, having

[1] *Dial.* ii. 37.

[2] Cassiodorus was born in the same year as Benedict, *i.e.* 480.

served the Gothic monarchy faithfully and long, and having lived to see the overthrow of all his cherished hopes, became a monk. A man of many weaknesses, but not without sterling virtues, a true friend, a sincere patriot, and an ardent lover of learning, Cassiodorus was at once the last eminent statesman for many centuries in Italy who was neither an ecclesiastic nor a soldier, and the first eminent statesman who withdrew from official life into a convent. The place which he selected for his retirement was, as might have been expected, characteristically unlike the barren gorge of Subiaco or the wild heights of Monte Cassino. It was Squillace, his ancestral home in Calabria—a lovely spot, hanging "like a cluster of grapes" on the slopes of the Appennines, with "voluptuous" outlook over luxuriant gardens and meadows and the sparkling blue waters of the gulf which bears its name.[1] In this "native land of the sun," where the air was so pure and invigorating that, as at Athens, the mind was stimulated to intellectual exertion, the old man founded two monasteries. The first, built on higher ground, was called Castellum—"montis Castelli secreta suavia"—a secluded abode, intended for those who desired a solitary, ascetic life. Below it was the cheerful monastery named Vivariense, rising on the banks of the little river Pellena, and surrounded with orchards and bright flower-gardens and sunny oliveyards. This delightful place, with its "modest and useful stream," its bee-hives and dove-cotes and cool fish-ponds in the rocky hollows—all described for us by Cassiodorus with such affectionate enthusiasm[2]—is unique among Italian monasteries, as being the first which was expressly designed to make its inhabitants not only holy but happy. Cassiodorus did not despise natural beauties, nor did he believe that the austerity of the cloister must necessarily exclude the enjoyment of innocent comforts and amenities. He deliberately set himself to make the monastic life pleasant, and to show by a practical demonstration that holiness need be none the less fervent if other means of satisfaction were not wanting.

But in founding the monastery Cassiodorus' principal aim was to provide an asylum for the humanities in a barbarous and destructive age—to establish a school of learning, in which

[1] See the beautiful description, Cassiod. *Var.* xii. 15.

[2] Cassiod. *De Inst. Div. Litt.* 28, 29.

the sacred, patristic, and classical writings might be carefully studied, transcribed, and preserved. To him the ideal monk was a student, primarily of Divine wisdom, but also of the productions of human genius. "For by the study of secular literature," he said, "our minds are trained to understand the Scriptures themselves." Hence, with incredible pains and at great cost, Cassiodorus collected what must, in those days, have been an exceptionally large and varied library, containing manuscripts suited to the requirements of every class of student. For the theologians were provided, in addition to carefully collated copies of the Scriptures, the writings of the Latin Fathers, and the best works of the Easterns, either translated or else in the original Greek. For the grammarians there were "the illustrious poets and orators," the study of whom, Cassiodorus hoped, would refine the style of his monks as well as widen their intellectual outlook. For scholars who were interested in other branches of learning, the capacious cupboards of the library contained the best works extant on their several subjects, whether it was history, geography,[1] music, or scientific agriculture. And, to assist his students in their labours, Cassiodorus himself composed, besides other treatises and commentaries, his famous dissertation, *De Artibus ac Disciplinis Liberalium Litterarum*, and another entitled *De Institutione Divinarum Litterarum*,—a tract on the method of Scriptural study, containing useful information respecting the best commentaries on each of the sacred books, an enumeration of the principal Christian historians and Fathers, and, finally, some regulations for the life of a monk, derived mostly from the writings of Cassian, which appear to be all that the religious at Squillace possessed in the nature of a written Rule.

Enthusiast as he was in the collection of manuscripts, Cassiodorus was no less anxious for their propagation by transcription. "Of all the works that can be accomplished by manual labour," he writes,[2] "none pleases me so much as the work of the copyists—if only they will copy correctly." To secure uniformity and accuracy in transcription, Cassiodorus compiled from the precepts of ten grammarians a treatise on

[1] Cassiodorus was particularly anxious that his monks should study geography. See *De Inst. Div. Litt.* 25.

[2] Cassiod. *De Inst. Div. Litt.* 30.

orthography, and commended it to the careful perusal of the "antiquarii." He also provided them with many conveniences in the performance of their task—a sun-dial, a water-clock, and mechanical lamps, self-trimming and self-supplied with oil. When a manuscript was finished it was enclosed in covers by monks who were specially trained in the art of bookbinding, and a large selection of patterns was provided, "that a man of taste may choose the form of covering which pleases him best."

But though Cassiodorus hoped to make his monastery pre-eminently a home of sound learning, he was not so pedantic as to suppose that all who dwelt in it would take kindly to study. He arranged, therefore, that other employments should be provided for those who were unable or unwilling to engage in purely intellectual pursuits. Thus some of the monks practised the art of medicine, others plied trades, others devoted themselves to gardening and agriculture. The wise founder reminded these last of Virgil's line, "Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes," adding, "It is not unbecoming for a monk to cultivate gardens, to till the fields, to take pleasure in the fruitfulness of orchards, for we read in the Book of Psalms: *Thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands, O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.*"[1]

The work of Cassiodorus has, perhaps, been insufficiently appreciated. Gregory, eulogist of Benedict, says not a word about the founder of Squillace, and monastic chroniclers and historians have treated him with scant courtesy. Yet Cassiodorus was the first man in Italy to recognize the possibilities of the convent as a school of liberal culture. He opened out for the Italian religious an entirely new sphere of activity. Of course, in other places, there were learned monks before his time. Jerome lectured in Bethlehem on Cicero and Virgil, and suffered many things in a dream by reason of his classical proclivities; at Tabennae there was a family of litterati, and every monk was obliged to learn to read and write; at Lerins and in the distant monasteries of Ireland and Wales, the sciences, both divine and secular, were sedulously cultivated. But in Italy humanism had not hitherto penetrated within the cloister, and even Benedict seems to have regarded the study of the Scriptures

[1] Cassiod. *De Inst. Div. Litt.* 28.

and the Fathers as sufficient education for an intellectual monk. To Cassiodorus, then, belongs the credit of introducing a new element into Italian monachism. He made the monastery a home of Christian science and enlightenment. His work, doubtless, was less far-reaching in its effects, less monumental, than that of Benedict; his influence was scarcely felt beyond the bounds of Italy. Yet within these limits he produced important results. Benedict the saint and Cassiodorus the savant contributed together the complementary elements of that ideal to which Italian monachism in the following centuries strove to conform itself.

(3) And now I come at last to Gregory, the monk made Pope. His was the work of the organizer and systematizer. Unlike Benedict and Cassiodorus, he made no great original contribution to the scheme and ideal of monastic life; he introduced no important innovation—not, at any rate, consciously and directly. All his energies were concentrated rather on strengthening and developing the system established by Benedict, on enforcing the prescriptions of the Benedictine Rule. The result of his efforts certainly was to modify the character of Italian monasticism by bringing it into closer connexion with the action of the Church, and particularly of the Papacy. But this ultimate effect was not deliberately sought after by Gregory. All that he aimed at doing was to translate into terms of practical life the ideals of the monk of Cassino, and to make the cloister in fact what it professed to be in theory, a school wherein the spirits of men might be trained in the way of perfection.

Convinced as he was of the value of the monastic system, Gregory did everything in his power to diffuse and propagate it. He warmly encouraged wealthy people to establish monasteries on their estates, and to bequeath their property for the settlement of new foundations. When such bequests were made—as they frequently were—he took care to see that they were carried into effect,[1] and that the new houses were established without loss of time, provided always that the endowment was adequate.[2] He himself, as we have already seen, devoted his

[1] *Epp.* i. 46; ii. 38; iii. 58; iv. 8, 9, 10; v. 50; viii. 5; ix. 10, 13, 164, 165, 170, 233; xiii. 18; xiv. 2.

[2] *Ibid.* ii. 15; ix. 58, 180, 233; xiii. 18.

own property to the endowment of seven new monasteries, one in Rome and six in Sicily; and, after he became Pope, one of his first acts was to provide a site in Corsica, "that the island, hitherto without a monastery, may be improved by the introduction of the conventual life."[1] At the same time, while he laboured for the diffusion of monachism by founding everywhere new colonies of religious, he was careful to prevent, so far as possible, the decline and decay of the older institutions, and there was no object on which he so gladly expended the revenues of the Patrimony as on their support and the satisfaction of their needs. Thus—to instance but a few of his numerous benefactions—the monks of St. Archangel in Tropaea of Bruttii were released from four-fifths of the rent which they paid to the Roman Church,[2] some other monks were granted a plot of land rent-free for thirty years,[3] a monastery at Catania was allowed an annual provision of ten solidi,[4] three thousand nuns in Rome were in receipt of an annual subsidy of eighty pounds,[5] a convent in Isauria received a substantial grant,[6] and even the monks of Mount Sinai were gratified with money, beds, and other gifts.[7] In short, wherever Gregory's influence extended, from Britain in the West to the distant parts of the East, it was consistently used to propagate and strengthen a system which the Pope had come to regard as essential for the spread of Christian piety.

Before, however, monachism could set about its proper work, there was need of a thorough reformation of abuses. The condition of the congregations in Italy and the islands towards the close of the sixth century was very unsatisfactory. The disorder of the time seems to have been reflected in the cloister, and gross scandals were of common occurrence. Thus we read of monks wandering about without rule or ruler,[8] migrating without permission to other monasteries,[9] leaving their monastery to work among the secular clergy,[10] abandoning the religious life and habit altogether,[11] appearing before lay tribunals,[12] accumulating private property,[13] admitting women

[1] *Epp.* i. 50.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 3.
[3] *Ibid.* ix. 96.
[4] *Ibid.* xiii. 23.
[5] *Ibid.* vii. 23.
[6] *Ibid.* v. 35.
[7] *Ibid.* xi. 2.
[8] *Ibid.* i. 38, 39; v. 33; vii. 32.
[9] *Ibid.* i. 40.
[10] *Ibid.* i. 40.
[11] *Ibid.* ii. 29; x. 9.
[12] *Ibid.* vi. 11.
[13] *Ibid.* i. 40; xii. 6.

into the monasteries,[1] living with women,[2] and even marrying.[3] The monks who dwelt in the little islands of the Tyrrhenian Sea—the "light-shunning" inhabitants of which have been so differently described in the passionate invective of a heathen poet[4] and the enthusiastic panegyric of a Christian bishop[5]—were reported to be involved in all manner of crimes.[6] And the monastic authorities, the abbats and priors, were not less degenerate than their subjects. In many cases they were scandalously negligent in enforcing discipline,[7] in some they were themselves guilty of grave immoralities.[8] In one instance two abbats were appointed in the same monastery on the same day—a circumstance significant of the prevalent confusion and disorder.[9] The convents of women appear to have been equally demoralized. One nun migrates from her monastery and has to be brought back[10]; a second is accused of embezzling the common funds[11]; a third quits the cloister to become the mistress of a notary of the Roman Church[12]; a fourth is torn from her monastery and compelled to marry, two bishops consenting to the sacrilege.[13] In Naples some soldiers were billeted in a nunnery[14]; in St. Martin's Convent in Sicily a doctor, named Anastasius, was allowed free access to the nuns, and did much harm[15]; in Sardinia and in Italy many consecrated women boldly left their convents and took husbands.[16]

The following passage from a letter to Januarius, archbishop of Cagliari, affords us an example of the scandals that occurred[17]:—

"It has come to our ears that you are remiss in your guardianship of the nunneries. For although your predecessors prudently arranged that clerics of approved character should take charge of them and minister to their requirements, yet now this wise precaution is utterly neglected. The consequence is that the nuns are obliged to resort in person to the public offices to pay their taxes, and also to visit their houses and farms to collect their rents. But it is very improper that the nuns should

[1] *Epp.* iv. 40. [2] *Ibid.* xiv. 16, 17. [3] *Ibid.* i. 40; ii. 29.
[4] Rutil. Namat. *De Reditu suo* i. 439 *sqq.*
[5] Ambros. *Hexam.* iii. 5. [6] *Epp.* i. 49, 50; v. 55; xiii. 48.
[7] *Epp.* iii. 3; v. 4. [8] *Ibid.* iii. 23; xiv. 2. [9] *Ibid.* ix. 20.
[10] *Ibid.* v. 4. [11] *Ibid.* v. 4. [12] *Ibid.* iv. 6.
[13] *Ibid.* ix. 224. [14] *Ibid.* ix. 207. [15] *Ibid.* v. 4.
[16] *Ibid.* iv. 24; v. 19. [17] *Ibid.* iv. 9.

be thus engaged in business matters which ought to be left to men. And it is easy for your Fraternity to correct the abuse by appointing a man of good life and manners, one whose age and station are beyond suspicion, to look after the interests of the nunneries, that the inmates may no longer be permitted on any pretext whatsoever to leave their precincts contrary to the Rule. But let them give themselves to praising God and keep within their convent, and so afford the faithful no grounds for base suspicion. If any nun, however, through former licence or wicked custom, has been or shall in future be induced to lapse into impurity, we will that, after being severely punished, she be consigned to some stricter convent, where with prayer and fasting she may do penance with profit to herself, and at the same time may afford by her example a terrible warning to others. As for a man who is detected in sin with a nun, he must be excommunicated if a layman, or, if a cleric, degraded from his office and relegated to a monastery as a punishment for his wickedness."

To the task of putting down these abuses Gregory addressed himself with zeal. Sometimes he commissioned the bishop of the diocese to investigate and punish offences[1]; sometimes the task was entrusted to a defensor[2] or an abbat[3] or to two or more of such persons in combination.[4] How vigorously he acted himself and expected others to act in such cases may be illustrated from the severe letter addressed to the Bishop of Sipontum[5]:—

"Had you known how to comport yourself as guardian of the monastic life, or how to act as a bishop, the daughter of Tullianus, of honoured memory, would never have been allowed to throw off her monastic habit and resume secular dress, or to write a perverse letter to us. But inasmuch as you are sunk in excessive sloth and stupor, the crime has hitherto been left unpunished, to your great disgrace. Yet, as we said before, if you had been anxious to do your duty, we should have heard of that wicked woman's punishment before we heard of her crime. But you are so sluggish and negligent, that, unless you yourself

[1] *Epp.* iv. 9; v. 4. [2] *Epp.* i. 40; iii. 23; xiii. 48; xiv. 2.

[3] *Ibid.* i. 49; v. 55. It appears from *ibid.* ix. 20 that the abbat Urbicus was general superintendent of all the monasteries in Sicily.

[4] *Ibia* i 50; viii. 8, 9; xiv. 17. [5] *Ibid.* viii. 8.

suffer canonical correction, you know not how to maintain discipline or to treat others with proper severity, and therefore we will, please God, show you on some fitting occasion how careful you ought to be. But now at all events, when you receive this letter, wake up and do what your slothfulness has hindered you from doing hitherto. Without delay arrest the woman, with the help of our defensor Sergius, and, rejecting all her excuses, compel her to resume at once the habit she has so wickedly despised; place her in a convent where she will be strictly guarded, and show yourself so zealous in the matter that she may learn from your severity how great has been her crime. And if—as we do not expect—any layman should, under any pretext, offer you opposition, at once suspend him from communion, and report him to us, that he may be punished for his execrable presumption. Take care to be circumspect and vigilant in your conduct of this affair, that your zeal in the present may in some degree atone for your neglect in the past."

In carrying through the reformation of the monasteries, Gregory, as has been said, made it his object to enforce the strictest obedience to the Rule of Benedict. At a later time, at any rate by the ninth century, it was commonly believed that he gave a formal and official sanction to that Rule; but that he did so much as this is exceedingly improbable.[1] Nevertheless, the regulations which he issued from time to time prove how closely he adhered and compelled others to adhere to the principles laid down by the master. It was by rigidly enforcing the prescriptions of the Rule, that Gregory hoped to purify and renovate the life of the monks, and to guard against the abuses which had become so common.

Thus, to mention a few of his regulations, Gregory laid great stress on the Benedictine law of poverty, declaring that the desire to acquire private property, being "notoriously unlawful,"[2] was an evident proof that a man had nothing of "the heart of a true monk." "If monks hold private property, neither concord nor charity can possibly subsist in their

[1] Conc. Duziac. ii. c. 7 (Labbe, ix. p. 266): "Eadem Regula S. Spiritu promulgata et laudis auctoritate beati Papae Gregorii inter canonicas scripturas et catholicorum doctorum scripta est teneri decreta." Baronius, ad ann. 595, § 59, writes: "Reperimus in scripto codice Sublacensi, in concilio Romano eundem Gregorium Papam probasse et confirmasse regulam S. Benedicti."

[2] *Epp.* i. 40.

congregation. For what is the state of a monk but a despising of the world? And how do those despise the world who, even in their monasteries, lust after gold?"[1] He forbade religious to acquire, retain, or dispose of anything as their own. All property which they possessed before they were "converted" (unless they disposed of it before their conversion) passed to the monasteries of which they became members, and could not even be bequeathed subsequently except by special dispensation obtained from the Pope.[2] All religious thus became entirely dependent on their monasteries, as the Rule of Benedict enjoined.

The law of chastity was, of course, enforced. Gregory directed that monks and nuns who left their monasteries to enter the state of matrimony should be brought back and punished with extreme severity.[3] While regarding such marriages with horror, however, Gregory appears to have recognized them as valid.[4]

The law of stability was equally insisted on, and when the cloister was once entered it could never be quitted.[5] It is true that in some very exceptional cases Gregory allowed this rule to be relaxed. Thus a certain woman, believing that her husband was guilty of adultery, took the veil in a fit of passion, and afterwards, when the man's innocence was proved, returned and lived again with him as his wife. The bishop of the diocese at once excommunicated the whole household, whereupon the husband appealed to Rome, and obtained an order directing the bishop to readmit the family to communion without delay, and after a short period to allow the woman herself to communicate and to treat her with kindness.[6]

Gregory was particularly solicitous to keep the monks, as far as possible, free from the disturbing influence of secular business, in which they were necessarily to some extent involved through the possession of landed property. He therefore directed that in the transaction of such concerns the monasteries should be represented by agents with fixed salaries. On this subject he wrote to Peter the Subdeacon in Sicily[7]: "As

[1] *Epp.* xii. 6. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 6; ix. 197; xi. 15; xiii. 5.
[3] *Ibid.* i. 40; ii. 29; v. 19, etc.
[4] See the "Venantius Letters" below; and cf. *Epp.* ix. 224.
[5] *Ibid.* ii. 29; iv. 6; viii. 8, 9; x. 9. [6] *Ibid.* ix. 3.
[7] *Ibid.* i. 67. So in *Epp.* iii. 3 Gregory writes to an abbat: "In causis

we are bound to be zealous in keeping the monks aloof from all public law-suits, that they may piously and earnestly devote themselves to their sacred ministry, so it is necessary that we should carefully arrange how the business of their monasteries may be managed, lest their minds should be distracted with various business cares, and so be weak and torpid in the discharge of their proper duties. The bearer of this letter, the abbat John, asserts that he has a great deal of business in connexion with his monastery.[1] Wherefore we charge your Experience to speak to Faustus, who was chancellor to the Magnificent Romanus, the ex-Praetor, and if you find him really willing to undertake such work, entrust the general business of the monastery to his management, giving him a fixed salary. It is well that the servants of God should at a small expense escape from the disturbance of business matters, so that, while the property of their monastery is not ruined by neglect, their minds should be free for the work of the Lord."

Though he did not emphasize the intellectual side of the monastic training, and though he was very far from desiring, like Cassiodorus, that the monastery should become pre-eminently a school of learning, yet Gregory was anxious that the moderate studies enjoined in Benedict's Rule should not be neglected. "I do not find"—so he wrote to an abbat[2]—"that such brethren of your monastery as I see, give time to reading. Wherefore you must needs consider how great a sin it is, if, when God gives you sustenance from the offerings of others, you neglect to learn His commandments."

The Imperial laws allowed marriages to be dissolved if either the husband or the wife chose to enter a monastery.[3] This principle, however, Gregory strongly condemned.[4] "Although a mundane law declares that a marriage may be dissolved for

istis procuratorem institue, et tu ad lectionem atque orationem vaca." Cf. *ibid.* iv. 9.

[1] *I.e.* the Monastery of S. Lucia in Syracuse, as appears from *Epp.* vii. 36.

[2] *Epp.* iii. 3.

[3] *Novel.* 123, c. 40: Εἰ δὲ συνεστῶτος ἔτι τοῦ γάμου ὁ ἀνὴρ μόνος ἢ ἡ γυνὴ μόνη εἰσέλθῃ εἰς μοναστήριον διαλυέσθω ὁ γάμος καὶ δίχα ῥεπουδίου, μεθ' ὃ μέντοι τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ εἰσερχόμενον εἰς μοναστήριον τὸ μοναχικὸν σχῆμα λάβῃ.

[4] *Epp.* xi. 30. Compare *Epp.* vi. 47, and see the story in Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* ix. 33 of a woman who left her husband to become a nun. Compare Bingham, vii. 3, § 3.

the sake of conversion, against the will of one of the parties, yet Divine law does not permit this to be done. For save for the cause of fornication, a man is on no account permitted to put away his wife, seeing that, after husband and wife are made one body in the union of wedlock, one member of it cannot enter a monastery while the other remains in the world." In the case of married persons, therefore—at any rate, when the marriage had been consummated[1]—Gregory insisted that one of them must not enter the cloister unless the other consented to do the same. On the other hand, he contended that any one who was simply betrothed was fully justified in entering a monastery, and was not liable to the penalties which such a breach of contract involved under other circumstances.[2]

Two slight innovations were introduced by Gregory. The first was the fixing of a minimum age at which a nun might be appointed abbess. The Pope was well aware that, although the majority of the nuns might be shielded from the disturbing influence of secular business by the appointment of proctors to look after their interests, yet the abbess could not avoid holding some intercourse with the outside world. Hence he insisted that she must be a woman to whom years had given gravity and the power to withstand temptation. "We most vehemently forbid the appointment of young girls as abbesses," he wrote.[3] "Let no bishop place the veil on virgins of less than sixty years."

Gregory's second innovation consisted in the prolongation of the period of novitiate. The Rule of Benedict prescribed a novitiate of at least one year[4]; Gregory ordained a probation of two years. The immediate occasion of this change was the

[1] Gregory's words are: "Postquam copulatione coniugii viri atque mulieris unum corpus efficitur" (*Epp.* xi. 30, and in almost the same terms, vi. 47).

[2] *Epp.* vii. 20.

[3] *Ibid.* iv. 11. The Council of Trent, sess. xxv. c. 7, puts the minimum age at forty. It should be noticed that Gregory's regulation refers only to the appointment of abbesses, not to the veiling of ordinary nuns. The age of admission for these was variously fixed at different times and places; *e.g.* by the Councils of Saragossa and Agde it was placed at forty, by the Council of Milevis and by the Third Council of Carthage at twenty-five. Basil admitted girls as young as sixteen or seventeen. Pope Leo the Great approved the age of forty.

[4] *Reg. Ben.* c. 58. Justinian ordered three years (*Novel.* 5, c. 2); so also Pachomius. The triennial probation seems to have been adopted in many of the older monasteries.

apostasy of a Neapolitan monk who had been tonsured without any probation whatsoever. Gregory thereupon wrote as follows to the Bishop of Naples[1]: "Let your Fraternity strictly interdict all monasteries from venturing to tonsure novices before they have completed two years in monastic life. During this period let careful proof be made of their life and manners, lest any of them should be dissatisfied with that which he had longed for, or should not hold fast to his choice. It is a serious thing that untried men should be banded together in the service of any master, but much more serious is it that those who have not been proved should be attached to the service of God." This investigation was to be made particularly strict in the case of slaves. Gregory ordered that they should be thoroughly tested before they were allowed to assume the monastic habit, and if it turned out that they had no true vocation, they were to be restored to their former servitude. When, on the other hand, their desire for conversion seemed sincere, they were to be allowed to take the vows without further difficulty, if they were servants of the Church; or, if they belonged to secular masters, they were to be purchased and placed in the monasteries.[2]

The difficult question of the admission into monasteries of persons who were under obligations to the State—of curiales, soldiers, and the like—occasioned a collision between Gregory and the Emperor. In the year 593 Gregory received from Constantinople an edict which decreed that no one engaged in public business should undertake any ecclesiastical office or retire into a monastery, and further, that no soldier should become a monk until his term of service had expired. This edict, which to us seems reasonable enough, in view of the increasing numbers of civil and military officials who endeavoured to escape the burdensome service of the State by taking

[1] *Epp.* x. 9.

[2] See the sixth canon of the Lateran Council of 595 (Greg. *Epp.* v. 57*a*). This canon deals only with slaves of the Church: but Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 16 introduces interpolations, thereby extending its application to the slaves of laymen. For the case of a slave proved and found wanting, see *Epp.* v. 28; ix. 107. For the purchase of a slave-girl who wished to become a nun, see *ibid.* iii. 39. In *Epp.* ix. 144 we have a case of a "servus iuris publici" who turned monk. The Council of Chalcedon, c. 4, forbade slaves to be received as inmates of monasteries against the will of their masters. So also the Council of Gangra, c. 3, and others. Leo the Great forbade the ordination of slaves whom their masters would not emancipate (Labbe, iii. p. 1293).

the tonsure, appeared to Gregory in the highest degree objectionable. That officials should be debarred from the Christian ministry he was willing to concede, for his experience had shown him that such persons made worldly and ambitious clergymen. But that they should be refused permission to retire into a monastery seemed to him nothing less than an insult to religion. Full of indignation, therefore, he wrote to the Emperor a protest, in which he stated in emphatic terms his own view of the matter, and boldly rebuked Maurice for his impious attempt to withdraw men from the service of God. This remarkable document, perhaps the most celebrated of all Gregory's letters, runs as follows[1]:—

"He is guilty before Almighty God who is not sincere both in word and deed to his Most Serene Sovereigns. I, the unworthy servant of your Piety, in the suggestions which I now offer, speak not as a bishop, nor as your servant by the law of the State, but as your servant in a personal sense, since, my Most Serene Lord, you were my lord before you became the lord of all men.

"When the Most Honourable Longinus the equerry came here, I received the law which my Sovereigns had issued, but I could not reply to it at the time, because I was tormented with disease. In this law your Piety has enacted that no one who is engaged in public business shall administer any office in the Church. And with this enactment I was well pleased, knowing as I do that a man who is anxious to quit the secular dress and take office in the Church wishes not to abandon his worldly life, but only to change the form of it. But when it is said in the same law that such persons are not to be allowed to retire for conversion into a monastery,[2] I am extremely surprised, since the obligations of the man can be discharged and his debts

[1] *Epp.* iii. 61. None of our authorities except Gregory mentions this law of Maurice. Hartmann notes: "Citat ad hunc locum Alteserra Constantini constitutionem, qua ratiociniis publicis obnoxii et publicis officiis addicti arcentur a sacris ordinibus nisi consensu principis (*L. Officiales C. de Episc. et Cleric.* l. 3. *C. Theod.*) adiecitque Innocentium I hanc legem probasse, ne ecclesia de his ad ordinem revocatis tristetur (cf. Iaffé *Reg.* ed. 2. *n.* 286. 314)." Maurice seems to have republished this law with further additions of his own.

[2] Gregory, in *Epp.* iii. 64, cites the provision more fully: "Ut nullus qui actionem publicam egit, nullus qui optio vel manu signatus vel inter milites fuit habitus, ei in monasterio converti liceat, nisi forte si militia eius fuerit expleta."

can, if necessary, be paid by the community into which he is received. Besides, if any one devoutly wished to become a monk, he would first restore anything he might have taken wrongfully, that being less encumbered he might discern more truthfully the state of his soul. It was further added in the same law that no one who was marked on the hand (as a soldier)[1] should be allowed to become a monk. I confess to my Sovereigns that I was struck with terror at this ordinance, because it closes the way to heaven against many, and forbids what has hitherto been lawful. There are, no doubt, many men who can lead a religious life even in a secular dress, but there are very many who, unless they leave everything, can in no wise find salvation with God.

"I, who thus address my Sovereigns, what am I but dust and a worm? Yet, inasmuch as I feel that this ordinance is directed against God the Creator of all things, I cannot keep silence. Power over all men has been given by God to your Piety for this purpose, that men may be helped in their pursuit of goodness, that the way to heaven may be opened wider, that the kingdom upon earth may minister to the kingdom of heaven. And now, behold, it is distinctly said that the man who has once been enrolled in the earthly soldiery shall not be allowed to become the soldier of our Lord Christ Jesus, until the time of his earthly service is completed or he has been discharged from the army for ill health.

"To this, behold, Christ answers by me, the lowest of His servants and of yours: 'I advanced you from being a notary to be captain of the guards, from captain of the guards to be Caesar, from Caesar to be Emperor, yea, and more than this, I have also made you the father of Emperors. I have committed My priests to your charge, and do you now withdraw your soldiers from My service?' Answer, I pray you, my Most Religious Sovereign; tell your servant what reply you will make to your Lord when He comes and thus addresses you at the judgment day.

[1] Recruits were marked on the hand, that they might be the more easily recognized if they afterwards deserted. "Sex erant militi necessaria: (1) non sit negotiator; (2) examinetur; (3) praestet sacramentum; (4) ensis ei cingatur; (5) nota publica eius brachiis inscribatur; (6) in album referatur, scribatur" (Gussanvillaeus).

"Possibly you believe that none of these men are sincere converts. But I, your unworthy servant, know that in my time many converted soldiers have worked miracles in their monasteries and wrought signs and wonders. And yet this law prohibits such men from becoming monks.

"I beg my Lord to inquire what Emperor it was who first issued such an edict,[1] and then to ponder well whether it is right to issue it yourself. You should also seriously consider that you are preventing men from leaving the world at the very time when the end of the world is at hand. Behold, there will be no delay; the heaven and earth will burn, the elements will glow with fervent heat, and the terrible Judge will appear with angels and archangels, thrones and dominations, principalities and powers. If He forgives you all your other sins, and speaks only of this law enacted against Himself, what, I pray, will be your excuse? Wherefore I beseech you by that some terrible Judge, let not your many tears, your many prayers, your many fasts, your many almsgivings, be under any circumstances obscured in the sight of Almighty God. I pray your Piety to lessen the severity of this law, either by changing its terms or by giving a fresh interpretation of its meaning, for the army of my Lords then becomes stronger against the enemy when the army of God grows stronger in prayer.

"In obedience to your commands, I have caused this law to be transmitted to the different countries. I have also informed my Most Serene Sovereigns by this letter that the law is certainly not in accordance with the will of God. I have thus done my duty on both sides. I have obeyed the Emperor, and yet have not kept back what I felt ought to be said on behalf of God."

This vehement remonstrance was enclosed in a letter to Theodore, the Emperor's physician, with the request that he would present it at a favourable opportunity. "I do not wish my responsalis to present it publicly," Gregory wrote,[2] "because you who are in the familiar service of the Emperor can speak to him with greater freedom and openness for the benefit of his soul, since he is very much occupied with business, and his mind

[1] As appears from *Epp.* iii. 64, Gregory alludes to Julian the Apostate; but nowhere else do we read that this Emperor promulgated any such law.

[2] *Epp.* iii. 64.

is rarely free from absorbing cares. You, my honoured son, will speak on Christ's behalf. If the Emperor listens to you, you will benefit both his soul and your own; if not, you will yet benefit your own."

Apparently the Emperor was not uninfluenced by the Pope's appeal, and Gregory himself, upon mature reflection, probably realized that it was well to take measures to prevent soldiers turning monks simply to escape the hardships of military service, and that in the case of the curiales it was very undesirable that the monasteries which received them should be involved in disputes respecting their liabilities. At any rate, in a letter addressed in 597 to the metropolitans of Italy and Illyricum and to the bishops of Sicily, Gregory ordered that no curialis should be received into a monastery until he was released from all obligations to the State, and no soldier without careful inquiry into his previous life, and until he had passed through a novitiate of three years' duration. "With this arrangement," he adds, "our Most Serene and Christian Emperor is entirely satisfied."[1] A little later we find the Pope writing to the Bishop of Naples, that no soldiers at all were to be received as monks without his own express permission.[2]

But Gregory's name is famous in the history of monasticism chiefly on account of his attempts to define the relation of the monasteries to the diocesan bishops and to the general body of the secular clergy. Some of his measures in this connexion must be shortly considered.

(*a*) First, then, what view did Gregory take of the relation of the monks to the bishops? Towards the end of the sixth century the need of definition on this point began to be urgently felt. Already there existed considerable jealousy and suspicion between the monks and their diocesans. The former aspired to become independent of episcopal control, the latter sought to exercise authority in spheres beyond their competence. The canons of councils, while emphatically asserting the bishop's right of jurisdiction over the monasteries of his diocese,[3] made

[1] *Epp.* viii. 10.

[2] *Ibid.* x. 9.

[3] See, for instance, the Council of Chalcedon, cc. 4, 8; the Council of Agde, cc. 27, 38; the First Council of Orleans, cc. 19, 22; the Second Council of Orleans, c. 21; the Fifth Council of Arles, cc. 2, 3, 5; and others. See also above, pp. 79, 80; and *Cod.* i. 3, 39; *Novel.* v. 9.

little or no attempt to define the limits of that jurisdiction. The result was that many bishops used their authority cruelly to oppress the institutions, the growing power of which they were beginning to fear. In Gregory's time several scandalous cases of episcopal aggression were reported. The Bishop of Orvieto, for instance, prohibited the celebration of masses in the Monastery of St. George, and forbade the dead to be buried there[1]; the Bishop of Pesaro had his episcopal chair set up in a monastery which he dedicated, celebrated a public mass, and carried off a chalice[2]; the Bishop of Squillace was accused of trying to impose on the monastery of Cassiodorus "certain things contrary to what had been allowed by his predecessors, and had received the sanction of long custom," and also of removing properties of the monastery, "pretending that they were gifts"[3]; the Archbishop of Cagliari made the consecration of a monastery the occasion of an exhibition of "every kind of avarice, violence, and wrong."[4] Sometimes the bishops encouraged, or at least refused to punish, monks who revolted from the discipline of their abbat[5]; often they supported the secular clergy in oppressing the monasteries. The religious houses in the diocese of Ravenna especially suffered in this last respect, the clergy, so it was said, "on the pretence of governing them, taking possession of them as though they were their own."[6] But the troubles of the monks of Ravenna were by no means peculiar.[7] Everywhere the monasteries were exposed to similar irritating interference, and in consequence much ill feeling had been engendered.

In endeavouring to remedy this unhappy state of things Gregory clung to a conservative policy. He made no daring innovation.[8] He did not concede to the monasteries any

[1] Greg. *Epp.* i. 12. [2] *Ibid.* vi. 44. [3] *Ibid.* viii. 32.
[4] *Ibid.* v. 2. [5] *Ibid.* vii. 32; ix. 107.
[6] *Ibid.* vii. 40; cf. vi. 28. [7] *Ibid.* ii. 29.

[8] Baronius discovered in the Vatican Library a Constitutum, addressed to all bishops, and purporting to have been issued by Gregory and a synod of bishops in the year 601. In accordance with the terms of this document, all monasteries are liberated from the control of the bishops. Its concluding section runs: "Hanc scriptorum nostrorum paginam omni futuro tempore ab omnibus episcopis firmam statuimus illibatamque servari, ut et suae ecclesiae iuvante Domino tantummodo contenti [sint], et monasteria ecclesiasticis conditionibus seu angariis vel quibuslibet obsequiis saecularibus nullo modo subiaceant, nullis canonicis iuribus deserviant, sed remotis vexationibus ac

absolute exemption from episcopal authority, or abridge in any way the canonical jurisdiction of the bishops. On the contrary, he consistently upheld this spiritual jurisdiction, and even administered severe rebukes to prelates who were lax in exercising it.[1] All that he desired was to confine the jurisdiction of the bishops to purely spiritual matters, and to repress those illegal aggressions whereby the monastic rule and order suffered violation. The rights conceded by the councils and the Rule of Benedict he was zealous to maintain, but he set his face against all attempts on the part of the bishops to strain those rights or to arrogate to themselves new and unconceded privileges. In pursuance of this policy, Gregory from time to time issued documents called Privilegia,[2] in which he set down in writing certain particulars in respect of which the monks were justified in claiming immunity from episcopal control. It must not be imagined that these documents were in any sense special privileges granted to specially favoured monasteries. They conferred no new rights upon the monks. They were merely statements of the rights which were common to all monasteries, set down in writing for the benefit of those institutions in particular which had suffered or were in danger of suffering from episcopal oppression. They were not grants of fresh privileges, but, as it were, charters in restraint of abuses, by the help of which the wronged monasteries might fortify themselves against the violence of the diocesans.

The rights of the monasteries which Gregory recognized may be summarized as follows:—While, on the one hand, the bishop was ordered to consecrate new monasteries,[3] to constitute abbats,[4] to provide for the celebration of masses in

cunctis gravaminibus diurnum [divinum] opus cum summa animi devotione perficiant." This Constitutum, however, is undoubtedly spurious, the greater part of it being forged from *Epp.* viii. 17. It is published in Appendix vii. to Migne's edition of the letters.

[1] *Epp.* vi. 11; vii. 12; viii. 8, 17, 32; ix. 203, 224; x. 3, 9; xiv. 16. In v. 47 Gregory speaks almost as though the episcopal jurisdiction was limited to the right of constituting abbats. But the above references prove that it also included the general supervision of discipline.

[2] The best example of Gregory's privilegia is that granted to the Monastery of St. John and St. Stephen at Classis (*Epp.* viii. 17). Compare also v. 49; and the charters sent to Gaul (vii. 12; xiii. 11, 12, 13). See above, pp. 84, 85.

[3] *Ibid.* ii. 15; iii. 58; v. 50; viii. 5; ix. 58, 180, 233; xiii. 18.

[4] *Ibid.* v. 47; vii. 12; ix. 20. A "praepositus," on the other hand, was constituted, not by the bishop, but by the abbat (iii. 3; vii. 10).

the chapel,[1] to visit the monks from time to time, to superintend their life and discipline and punish offenders[2]; on the other hand, he was forbidden to burden the monasteries for his entertainment, to abstract anything from the revenues, properties, or charters, or to make any schedule or disposition thereof. If any dispute arose on a question of property between the monastery and the Church, it was to be settled by arbitration, oaths being made on the Holy Gospels. Further, the bishop was forbidden to give the office of abbat to a stranger or any person other than him whom the monks themselves elected, or to put a superior over the abbat, or to ordain monks to any ecclesiastical order without the abbat's permission, or to hinder the abbat from communicating freely with the Pope, or to place his chair within the monastery, or to permit public masses to be celebrated there.[3] The bishop, in short, while retaining his spiritual jurisdiction over the monks, with the right of punishing those who failed to live in accordance with their Rule, was deprived of all power of interfering in the internal concerns of the monastery, in the disposition of its property, in the election of its officers, and the like. In the management of all such matters the monasteries were left in complete independence.

The privilegia of Gregory mark the beginning of a change which was to materially affect the history of the Church in the Middle Ages—the change which eventually emancipated the monks from the control of their diocesans, and brought them under the direct authority of the Roman See. There is no reason, certainly, to suppose that Gregory deliberately aimed at effecting such a change[4]; that he consciously sought to strengthen the power of the Papacy by establishing a close band

[1] *Epp.* ii. 15; iii. 58; v. 50; vi. 44; vii. 12; ix. 58, 180.

[2] See p. 187, *note* 1.

[3] *Epp.* v. 47, 49; vi. 44; vii. 12, 40; viii. 17; xiii. 11, 12, 13.

[4] It is true that Gregory insisted that abbats must be permitted to communicate freely with Rome, and on one occasion he appears to have threatened, although in ambiguous language, to exempt a monastery from the bishop's control altogether. ("Haec itaque omnia vigilanti cura emendare iam secundo commonita sanctitas vestra non differat, ne, si post hoc negligentes vos esse, quod non credimus, senserimus, aliter monasteriorum quieti prospicere compellamur. Nam notum vobis sit, quia tantae necessitati servorum Dei congregationem amplius subiacere non patimur." *Epp.* vii. 40.) On the other hand, he did not encourage appeals to Rome by the monasteries; preferring rather to refer matters in dispute to local arbitration (*ibid.* viii. 17) or to the decision of the metropolitan of the province (*ibid.* vii. 32; xiv. 6).

between it and the monasteries scattered throughout the world. He had no such far-reaching scheme. In this as in other cases he was simply applying his strict ideas of duty and discipline to circumstances as they occurred. Nevertheless, although Gregory had no political ends in view, his defence of the monasteries was the commencement of a revolution. Hitherto the councils had aimed at protecting the rights of the bishops; Gregory was the first, or almost the first, to safeguard the rights of the monks. And this contrary movement in favour of the monasteries against the diocesans led to results in the highest degree important both for the monasteries, the bishops, and the Papacy. With these, however, we are not at present concerned. It is sufficient to note that the close alliance which in later times subsisted between the monasteries and the Papacy, together with the system of exemptions of which Monte Cassino, St. Martin's at Tours, Fulda, and St. Augustine's at Canterbury are eminent instances, may be traced back in its germ to the time of Gregory the Great.

(*b*) Secondly, what view did Gregory take of the relation of the monks to the general body of the clergy? Like many others before him, Gregory was convinced that ecclesiastical cure was incompatible with the monastic life, and he was inclined to emphasize the difference between the clerical and the monastic condition, and keep the two, as far as possible, distinct and separate. Of course, he had no desire to prevent monks becoming curates, or curates monks, but he felt that the duties of the parochial clergy could not be adequately discharged by any who continued to reside in monasteries, while at the same time, the interests of the monasteries were certain to suffer so soon as the secular clergy were granted a footing within the walls.

On the one hand, then, with regard to curates who desired to become monks, Gregory enjoined that they should be received into the monasteries on the same footing as the rest of the brethren, on condition that they ceased to exercise ecclesiastical functions outside the monastery. Once become monks, they could not be compelled against their will to return to their ministrations in the Church,[1] nor, even if they wished it, could they do so unless the abbat gave his consent, and the bishop of

[1] *Epp.* ix. 157.

the diocese judged them worthy of the "sacerdotium."[1] If, however, the cleric desired it, and the abbat and bishop gave permission, he might be disharged from the monastery and reappointed by the bishop to an ecclesiastical cure.

On the other hand, with regard to monks who desired to take Orders, a distinction was drawn between those who wished to become chaplains of their monastery and those who aspired to serve in the ranks of the secular clergy.

In those monasteries where none of the inmates were ordained, it was necessary to introduce secular priests to celebrate mass. Thus in ordering the dedication of a monastery at Naples, Gregory wrote to the bishop[2]: "As often as is necessary let the Sacrifice of the Mass be celebrated in the consecrated oratory by the priests attached to your Church. But neither you, my brother, nor your priests must cause any trouble to the monastery except for the purpose of enforcing discipline. Nor are you to claim any share of what may be presented to the monastery by the devout, for the monks who labour there ought to have the benefit of the offerings of the faithful." But the introduction of the parish priests led to difficulties. Sometimes the extern clergy claimed a portion of the offerings made to the monastery[3]; sometimes they insisted on celebrating public masses in the chapel, drawing thither a crowd of men and women[4]; sometimes they even administered baptism publicly within the monastery.[5] Therefore, to avoid the disputes and disturbances occasioned by such practices, Gregory was glad to sanction the ordination of chaplains within the monasteries to celebrate mass, and officiate at funerals.[6] He merely required that the monks seeking this

[1] *Epp.* i. 40. See Bingham, vii. 2, § 8. [2] *Epp.* v. 50.

[3] *Ibid.* ii. 29.

[4] *Ibid.* v. 49; vi. 44. In the formulae authorizing the consecration of monasteries, public masses are forbidden.

[5] *Ibid.* iii. 56: "Pridem praecepimus ut de monasterio . . . baptisterium propter monachorum insolentias, debuisset auferri, atque in eodem loco quo fontes sunt altare fundari."

[6] *Ibid.* ix. 18; xii. 15. The only duty of these monastic clergy expressly mentioned by Gregory, is that of saying mass. Not a word is said about the sacrament of penance; and it seems unlikely that the chaplains heard the confessions of the monks. According to the *Rule of Benedict* c. 46, (*a*) confessions of open sins were made to the abbat or the whole community; (*b*) confessions of secret sins were made to the abbat only or to a "spiritalis senior." In a general way the abbat acted as a "pater spiritalis" (c. 49). Hence we learn that, inasmuch as the abbat was often a layman, the duty of

ordination should be free from canonical disabilities, and that when ordained they should confine their ministrations to their monastery, and not presume to serve in the parish church or elsewhere. The following letter, written to a bishop of Palermo, sanctions an ordination of this kind[1]: "Urbicus, abbat of the Monastery of St. Hermas at Palermo, in conjunction with his congregation, has addressed to us an earnest request that a priest should be ordained in his monastery to celebrate mass. And as there ought to be no delay in granting such a petition, we have thought right to exhort your Fraternity, by this present letter, to consecrate by God's help without delay whoever shall be elected from that congregation for the ministry, provided that his life, character, and actions are worthy of so high an office; that so the aforesaid Urbicus may not be obliged either to leave his monastery to hear mass, or to bring in a stranger to celebrate."

The case of monks who desired to minister in parish churches was quite different. Gregory ordained that no monk should be promoted to such ecclesiastical cure without the consent of his abbat, and that when promoted he should lose all rights in his monastery and should no longer reside there.[2] If an abbat coveted such promotion, he must make his choice between the parochial charge and his abbacy; both offices he was forbidden to hold.[3] "Do not," Gregory wrote to Maximianus, bishop of Syracuse,[4] "allow presbyters or deacons or any other

confessing to, and receiving absolution from, a priest was not as yet recognized in monasteries. Moreover, it appears from the Rule that confessions were only made when a fault was felt to have been committed. We have no hint of anything like regular or habitual confessions.

[1] *Epp.* vi. 39.

[2] *Ibid.* viii. 17: "Quisquis ex praedicto monasterio ad ecclesiasticum ordinem pervenerit, ulterius illic nec potestatem aliquam nec licentiam habeat habitandi."

[3] *Ibid.* vii. 40: "Sed ne vel per cuiuslibet monachi aut abbatis promotionem onus aliquod fortasse sustineant, studendum vobis est ut, si quispiam abbatum aut monachorum ex quocunque monasterio ad clericatus officium vel ordinem sacrum accesserit, non illic aliquam habeat ulterius potestatem, ne monasteria cuiuslibet occasionis velamine ea quae prohibemus sustinere onera compellantur."

[4] *Ibid.* iv. 11. Compare *ibid.* v. 1: "Nemo potest et ecclesiasticis obsequiis deservire, et in monachica regula ordinate persistere, ut ipse districtionem monasterii teneat, qui cotidie in obsequio ecclesiastico cogitur permanere." Cf. Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 54.

ecclesiastics who serve churches (*qui ecclesiis militant*), to become abbats of monasteries. But let them either give up their clerical service (*clericatus militia*), and then be promoted to hold office in the monasteries; or, if they prefer to remain abbats, let them on no account be allowed to continue to serve as (parochial) clergymen. The duties of each office separately are so weighty that no one can rightly discharge them. It is therefore very improper that one man should be considered fit to discharge the duties of both, and that by this means the ecclesiastical order should interfere with the monastic life, and the rule of the monastic life in turn should interfere with the interests of the churches."

Thus did Gregory draw a sharp distinction between the monks and the parochial clergy. A monk might become a curate, or a curate a monk, but a man might not be both at one and the same time. Undoubtedly Gregory believed that the life of the monks was the higher of the two, and his prohibition of secular intrusion was enforced mainly in their interest. Notwithstanding this view, however, he was willing, when necessary, to withdraw monks from their convents and place them in the ranks of the secular clergy. He allowed bishops to ordain them for parochial work in limited numbers,[1] and he himself elevated several to the episcopate.[2] On two occasions at least he even entrusted the care of a church to a monastic congregation. Hearing that the services at the Church of St. Pancras at Rome were neglected by its clergy, he consigned the property and care of the church to a congregation of monks whom he established in an adjacent monastery. They were to procure a priest to celebrate mass, and he was to live with them in the monastery and be supported by them.[3] In similar manner the Church of St. George was handed over to the abbat Maximianus and his congregation in Sicily.[4] But such arrangements served at a later time as a precedent for certain modifications in the relationship of the monks to the

[1] *Epp.* i. 18; vi. 27; vii. 40; viii. 17; x. 1 (where, however, it is not expressly stated that the monks are to be ordained).

[2] The most notable are Maximianus of Syracuse, Augustine of Canterbury, and Marinianus of Ravenna.

[3] *Ibid.* iv. 18.

[4] *Ibid.* ix. 7.

parochial clergy, such as Gregory himself would certainly not have approved.

The question arises—How far did Gregory recognize the monks themselves as clergy? Originally, of course, all monks (save those who had been further ordained to an ecclesiastical order) were regarded as laymen, the tonsure not being considered as in any way an equivalent for Orders. As late as the middle of the fifth century monks were subject to the same penalties and disabilities as laymen.[1] If a monk was ordained presbyter or bishop, he was obliged, like a layman, to first receive all the minor Orders. The beginning of a change, however, is marked by a decree of Pope Gelasius, which, while still requiring a monk to receive the lower Orders, yet, as a tribute to his religious life, granted him a quicker passage through them than was conceded to laymen, a monk being eligible for ordination to the priesthood at the expiration of only one year.[2] A further advance seems to have been made by Gregory. In one of his letters he gave directions that a certain pious layman, with a view to his ultimate elevation to the episcopate, should be tonsured either as a monk or as a subdeacon.[3] It is dangerous to draw conclusions from a single passage, particularly when that passage is ambiguous, but it certainly seems as though Gregory here regarded the "status monasticus" as the equivalent of the subdiaconate. On the other hand, Gregory's regulations concerning the lapsed prove that he still drew a wide distinction between the clergy and the monks. For while a lapsed cleric could never be restored to his office, a lapsed abbat might,[4] and further, an abbat who was found to have lapsed previously to his appointment was allowed to retain his abbacy.[5] These regulations, however—especially severe on the clergy on account of their peculiar functions in the service of the altar—do

[1] Council of Chalcedon, c. 2. Cf. Hieron. *Epp.* 14. 8: "Alia monachorum est causa, alia clericorum."

[2] Gelas. *Ep.* ix. *ad Episc. Lucaniae*, c. 3 (Labbe, iv. p. 1188).

[3] *Epp.* xii. 4: "Tonsorandus est, ut vel monachus vel a vobis subdiaconus fiat, et post aliquantum temporis, si Deo tum placuerit, ipse ad pastoralem curam debeat promoveri." It is noticeable that Gregory's contemporary, Gregory of Tours, certainly calls monks "clerici." *De Glor. Mart.* 76 is decisive on this point. Compare also *Vitae Patr.* vi. 2. Mabillon remarks that after the sixth century monks began to be classed in popular estimation with the clergy (*AA. SS. O.S.B.* Praef. *Saec.* ii.).

[4] *Epp.* v. 4, 17, 18.

[5] *Ibid.* xiv. 2.

not necessarily contradict the view that Gregory, for purposes of ecclesiastical promotion, was willing to accept the monastic tonsure as the equivalent of the subdiaconate.

An account of Gregory's dealings with the monasteries would be incomplete without some reference to the remarkable "Venantius Letters"[1]—that curious correspondence between the inflexible Pope and a renegade monk, which presents to the admirers of Gregory a problem not easy of solution. Venantius was a wealthy noble of Syracuse.[2] At one period of his life he had in a moment of enthusiasm become a monk, but finding that he had msitaken his vocation, he quitted his monastery, married a wife, and became the acknowledged leader of a literary circle whose principles were opposed to asceticism. The lady Italica, the wife of Venantius, was a woman of high rank and many accomplishments. It was perhaps her beauty and riches that chiefly induced Venantius in his monastery to reconsider his determination to renounce the vanities of the world. If this was so, it explains the fact that Italica, charming as she was, failed to find favour in the eyes of Gregory. The Pope disapproved of her, acknowledged her attractions, indeed, but expressed at the same time an irritating hope that they were not but the covering of "a hidden sore within." He was annoyed with her, moreover, because he considered that she had dealt harshly with some peasants belonging to the Roman Church, and he suspected the sincerity of her plausible explanations.[3] But though he disliked the lady, Gregory was careful to treat her with studied courtesy. For Venantius himself, and for his two little daughters, Barbara and Antonina, he had a warmer regard.

Such was the family of the ex-monk Venantius, to whom, a few months after his elevation to the pontificate, Gregory addressed the following impassioned appeal[4]:—

[1] These letters are *Epp.* i. 33; iii. 57; vi. 40, 41; ix. 232; xi. 18, 23, 25, 59. (It is probably another Venantius who is addressed in *Epp.* ix. 13; xiii. 14.) The letters were written at different dates between March 591 and August 601. The first extant letter shows that earlier communications had passed between Gregory and Venantius. These, however, have not been preserved.

[2] He is entitled Patricius in Joh. Diac. *Vita* iii. 44, 48, and in the inscription of Greg. *Epp.* vi. 40. Usually, however, Gregory omits the title, possibly because he thought it inappropriate for one who had been a monk.

[3] *Epp.* iii. 57.

[4] *Ibid.* i. 33.

"Many foolish people have supposed that, if I were raised to the episcopate, I should refuse to address you, or have any intercourse with you by letter. But it is not so. The very office I hold compels me not to remain silent. For it is written: *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet.* I will speak, therefore, whether you will or no, for with all my might I desire that you may be saved, or that I at all events may be delivered from the guilt of your destruction. You remember in what estate you once were, and you know to what you have fallen because you would not think of the punishment which must come from the severity of God. Weigh, then, your fault while there is time, tremble while you can before the severity of the Judge who is coming, lest you feel the bitterness of His wrath when you can no longer escape from it by tears. If Ananias deserved death for keeping back money he had given to God, consider what peril you will incur at the judgment—you, who have robbed Almighty God not of money but of yourself, having once dedicated yourself to Him in the monk's estate. Wherefore, if you will hear and give heed to the words of my reproof, you will find in the end how pleasant and sweet they are. I own I speak in sorrow, and I can scarcely address you, so absorbed am I in grief for your sin. And yet in the consciousness of your guilt you can hardly bear my words; you blush; you are confounded; you remonstrate. If, then, you cannot bear the words of one who is but dust, what will you do when the judgment of the Creator is pronounced? I believe the mercy of the Divine grace is very great towards you, in that God sees that you are flying from life, and still preserves you for life, in that He sees you proud, and still bears with you, in that He is sending you the words of rebuke and admonition through His unworthy ministers. Therefore you should think seriously of what St. Paul says: *We beseech you, brethren, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation.*

"But I know that when my letter is received, your friends will immediately assemble, your literary clients will be summoned, and where life is at stake counsel will be sought from men who are advocates of death—men who love, not you, but

your purse, who say only what may please you at the time. Such, as you yourself remember, were those counsellors in former days who led you on to commit so great a sin. I will quote you the saying of a profane author: 'Consider all things with your friends, but begin with considering your friends themselves.'[1] If you want an adviser in your affairs, I beg you let me be that adviser. You will get the truest counsel from one who loves, not yours, but you. May Almighty God reveal to your heart with what love and charity my heart embraces you—so far at least as it can do so without sinning against Divine grace. For I attack your fault, yet love your person; I love your person, but will have none of your wicked fault. If, then, you believe that I love you, come to the threshold of the Apostles, and take me as your adviser. And if perchance you think me too exacting on God's behalf, and are suspicious of my burning zeal, I will call the whole Church together into council upon this question, and whatever all agree can be done with safety I will in no wise contradict, but will gladly carry it out and subscribe to the common decision. Follow my advice, and may the grace of God preserve you."

This urgent letter produced no effect, and for some years the correspondence seems to have been discontinued. In 596, however, a violent quarrel broke out between Venantius and John, the bishop of Syracuse. The ex-monk sent his armed retainers, who burst into the bishop's palace and perpetrated acts of violence. The bishop, for his part, refused to receive the oblations of Venantius, or to permit mass to be celebrated in his private chapel. To the crime of apostasy Venantius had thus added the crime of violence and outrage, and we should have expected that Gregory would have delayed no longer to excommunicate him. We learn with amazement, however, that in this case the Pope, usually so inflexibly severe towards offenders, did nothing more drastic than send an admonition to the insolent monk to be reconciled with his bishop; while at the same time he ordered John not only to receive his oblations, but even, if required, to go in person and say mass in the chapel.[2]

[1] Seneca *Epp.* 3: "Tu omnia cum amico delibera, sed de ipso prius. Post amicitiam credendum est, ante amicitiam iudicandum." Jerome calls Seneca "Seneca noster."

[2] *Epp.* vi. 40, 41.

Another break now occurs in the correspondence, and when next we hear of Venantius he was suffering from bad health. Gregory, still condoning his apostasy, wrote him two letters full of kind expressions. In one he urged the sick man not to be too solicitous about his bodily ailments, but to give his whole attention to the care of his soul.[1] The second letter contained a short exposition of the use of pain. "We who have sinned in many things through the enticement of the flesh, are purged through the affliction of the flesh. Provided that it turns our mind to God, our present pain abrogates our past guilt; but if it does not turn us to His fear, it is but the commencement of pain to come. Pain is sent to alarm us, to teach us to fear the strict Judge, and by this to shield us ultimately from His punishment. No one can tell, no one can count, the millions sunk in wanton ease, headlong in blasphemy and pride, abiding in robbery and wickedness to the day of their death, who have lived in this world with never so much as a headache to trouble them, but have been struck down suddenly and delivered to hell-fire. We, then, have a token that we are not forsaken, in that we are continually scourged." The letter concludes with an exhortation to penitence and satisfaction, but no direct reference is made to Venantius's great sin.[2]

Early in 601 Italica was dead, and it was rumoured in Rome that Venantius himself was rapidly sinking. Gregory now hastened to make one last effort, through John of Syracuse, to persuade the dying man, even at the eleventh hour, to save his soul by resuming his monastic state. "Let this be your first care," so he wrote to the bishop.[3] "On no account neglect to provide for his soul. Exhort, entreat, set before him God's dreadful judgment, hold out the promise of His ineffable mercy, that even at the last hour he may be induced to return to his former estate, and that his great sin stand not against him in the eternal judgment."

It seems, however, that the apostate died impenitent. His last hours were troubled by anxiety about the welfare of his two daughters, Barbara and Antonina. A claim on his estate had been put forward by certain persons, apparently connected with the Government, and in his distress Venantius implored

[1] *Epp.* ix. 232. [2] *Ibid.* xi. 18. [3] *Ibid.* xi. 25.

the Pope to protect his children, and arrange that they should either remain in Sicily or else be brought to Rome. But in his anxiety to take every possible precaution, Venantius overreached himself. Not content with committing his children to the care of the Pope, he also entrusted them to the protection of the Emperor, and thereby afforded the Government harpies the very excuse they desired for meddling in his affairs. Although he was much perplexed and annoyed by this foolish proceeding, Gregory wrote kindly to the girls, bidding them have no fears for the future, and promising to provide for them, "that we may fully repay the debt we owe to the goodness of your parents"—somewhat strange language, surely, as applied to a renegade monk and the partner in his crime![1]

The last of the "Venantius Letters" was written to the girls a few months later, after their father's death. "When I received your letters," the Pope wrote,[2] "I was quite delighted to hear of your welfare, and I implore Almighty God to protect you from evil spirits in thought, and from perverse men, and from all things contrary to you, and so to settle you in a suitable marriage, whereat we may all rejoice. But do you, my sweet daughters, put your trust in His aid, and being ever under the shadow of His defence, escape the plots of wicked men. For whatever human comfort or adversity there may be, it is naught unless His grace protect you or His displeasure trouble you. Put not your trust in any man, then, but bind your whole soul in confidence to Almighty God. So while we sleep He will protect you, of whom it is written, *Behold He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

"You say you are hastening to the threshold of St. Peter, chief of the Apostles. I greatly wish and fervently hope to see you joined in his Church to worthy husbands, so that you may obtain some little comfort from me, and I may have great joy in your presence. I have taken care to commend your joint cause to my most reverend brother, the bishop John, and to Romanus our Defensor, that by God's help they may be able to complete what they have begun. I accept with pleasure your present of two blankets, which you say are your own work. But I must tell you that I do not believe that; you are seeking to be praised for the work of others, and very likely

[1] *Epp.* xi. 23. [2] *Ibid.* xi. 59.

you have never touched a spindle. Yet this does not trouble me, for I wish you to love reading the Holy Scriptures, that when you have husbands you may know how you ought to live and how to conduct your households."

Thus ends a very remarkable series of letters, which throw a curious light on Gregory's methods of dealing with great personages. Had Venantius been a man of no influence, we cannot doubt that the Pope's conduct would have been very different. A short, sharp letter to the bishop of the diocese, ordering him to drag back the renegade to his monastery, and force him to do penance, would have ended the affair in the usual way. But as it happened, Venantius was a powerful person—possibly a Government official, and not improbably connected, through himself or his wife, with noble and influential families at Constantinople. He had large estates, numerous retainers, and considerable wealth. His friends and clients were many, and he seems to have been the leader of a party that was not altogether friendly to the Church. Venantius, in fact, was one of the notables of Sicily, and claimed the privilege of doing as he liked. Yet Gregory's forbearance is certainly astonishing. Doubtless it would have been impossible to drag the ex-monk from the midst of his friends and servants and imprison him in a convent; but why did not the Pope at least declare him excommunicate, in accordance with the Chalcedonian canon which decreed that penalty against monks who married? Why did he order the Bishop of Syracuse to be reconciled to the rebel? Why in his letters to Venantius did he adopt a tone of affection and cordiality so different from that which he was accustomed to use towards hardened culprits? The only satisfactory explanation of his conduct seems to be that he was influenced throughout by motives of expediency. If Venantius had become an open enemy, he might have done much harm to the Church and to the monasteries of Sicily. At any rate, he would almost certainly have become the patron and defender of all the disaffected clerics and runaway monks who claimed his protection. The hostility of the anti-Church party would have become more pronounced, and much embarrassment and annoyance would have resulted for the Bishop of Syracuse and his clergy. For the sake of peace, then, the Pope probably felt himself justified

in passing over the sin of Venantius, just as, for the sake of public ends, he felt himself justified in lavishing encomia on Queen Brunichildis, and in singing triumphal paeans in honour of Phocas. His policy was doubtless worldly wise, but it was hardly worthy of a Christian saint, and it gives us somewhat of a shock to find Gregory deliberately setting aside a canonical ordinance and relaxing his own disciplinary regulations out of consideration for the influence and high position of an offender. It is only fair to observe, however, that there may have been circumstances of which we know nothing, which, if ascertained, would put a different complexion on this difficult case.

The general result of Gregory's labours in the cause of monasticism was a strengthening of the system, whereby it was enabled to develop its potentialities more freely, and to become a practical force in Christendom. Gregory built up the system from within, by instituting a thorough reformation of the abuses which weakened it, and by bringing it into strict accord with the principles laid down by Benedict. He also protected it from without, by putting a check on the aggressive tyranny of the bishops, and by delivering it from the intrusion and interference of the secular clergy. He aimed at making it an efficient and self-sufficient organization, working in the interests of the Church for the highest ends. And he did much towards translating his ideal into a reality. Gregory faithfully carried on the work begun by Benedict. He gave practical effect to his ideas. And if monasticism in the West developed into a mighty force for the leavening of mediaeval society and the redemption of the mediaeval Church, it was owing in large measure to the wisdom and energy of the first monk-Pope.

CHAPTER X

GREGORY'S RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCHES OF THE EAST

For the sake of clearness, it will be convenient to divide the subject-matter of this chapter into two parts. The first part will give some account of Gregory's struggles and controversies with the Patriarch of Constantinople, the history of which is of no slight importance, inasmuch as it illustrates the increasing jealousy and hostility which was growing up between the first and the second in rank of the Patriarchs, and also as it clearly brings out Gregory's own views respecting the ecclesiastical supremacy of the See of the Chief of the Apostles. The second part will give an outline of Gregory's dealings with the other Churches, ecclesiastical institutions, and personages in the East.

(1) We will begin with the story of Gregory's conflict with Constantinople.

It will be remembered that the bishop of Constantinople at this time was that notable ascetic, John the Faster, whose elevation to the patriarchal dignity was witnessed by Gregory when he was himself residing in the Imperial city as apocrisiarius of Pope Pelagius. The appointment of John was the beginning of much trouble and annoyance for the Roman Pontiffs. For, although a man of high personal integrity, and free from the vulgar vice of self-seeking ambition, John was heart and soul devoted to his Church, the dignities and privileges of which he was resolved to maintain and increase to the utmost of his ability. Humble and self-effacing in all that concerned him personally, he felt that humility and self-effacement were virtues which ill befitted the bishop of the capital of the Roman Empire, at any rate in things pertaining

to the prerogatives of his see. Hence he devoted himself with ardour to the prosecution of the policy of his predecessors—that, namely, of making the See of Constantinople supreme in Eastern Christendom, and of vindicating for it in the East a position of complete equality with the See of Rome. The times, no doubt, were in some respects favourable to the prosecution of such a policy. The isolation of Rome by reason of the Italian wars, its political insignificance as compared with the capital on the Bosphorus, could not fail to weaken its ecclesiastical claims in the opinion of those who saw no reason why the metropolis of Christendom should not be identical with the metropolis of the Roman Empire. To many it must have seemed an absurd anomaly that the patriarch of the splendid city of the Caesars should be second in rank to the bishop of the ruined and deserted old city on the banks of the Tiber. Moreover, the Emperor himself was naturally biassed in favour of the claims of Constantinople, realizing, as he did, that his own influence in the affairs of the Church must necessarily increase in proportion to the power of his subservient patriarch. On the other hand, the ancient primacy of Rome, guaranteed alike by canonical ordinance and by the sanctity of Apostolical tradition, presented an obstacle to Eastern ambition which could not be overcome without the greatest difficulty. Nevertheless, secure in the Emperor's support, and perhaps, also, in the good will of many of the Eastern bishops, John felt encouraged to enter upon the struggle. He was determined, if he could, to confine the jurisdiction of the Pope to Western Christendom, and to secure for himself and his successors an acknowledged supremacy over the whole of the Eastern Church.

It was not long before John commenced aggressions. In a synod held at Constantinople in 588, to settle the affairs of the See of Antioch, he assumed, in a manner which could not fail to attract attention, the title of "Universal Bishop." This title was not, indeed, a new one, having been taken by the patriarchs at the Synod of Constantinople in 518, and again in that of Mennas, and having been applied to them by Justinian. Nor was the term confined to the patriarchs of Constantinople. In the first known instance of its use, it was given to Dioscorus of Alexandria; in some documents read at the Council of

Chalcedon it was applied to Pope Leo; and by certain Eastern correspondents it had been conferred as a mark of honour on Popes Hormisdas, Agapetus, and Boniface the Second. None of the Popes, however, had applied it to themselves, and its assumption—or rather resumption—by John at this particular juncture, when relations between East and West were becoming more and more strained, was regarded at Rome in the light of an encroachment. Pope Pelagius the Second lost no time in making a formal protest, annulled the acts of the synod, and forbade his representative to communicate with the offending Patriarch.[1] As John, despite this protest, continued to use the title, Gregory, on succeeding to the government of the Apostolic See, made fresh remonstrance through his responsalis, though he sent no formal protest in writing. But the Patriarch was not to be put down thus easily. He betook himself to the Emperor, and representing, doubtless, that the Pope's action was the outcome of jealousy and a quarrelsome disposition, persuaded Maurice to order Gregory to let the matter rest. The Imperial command, of course, put the Pope in a difficulty. He must either, by his silence, yield a tacit approval of the Patriarch's assumption of the title, or else he must put himself in open antagonism to the Emperor. For the moment Gregory determined to keep quiet, though he held himself in readiness to reopen the question when a favourable opportunity should occur.

Meanwhile chance afforded the Pope a not unwelcome occasion for demonstrating before the world his own superiority to his brother of Constantinople. Two Eastern presbyters, John of Chalcedon and Athanasius who belonged to the Monastery of St. Mile in Isauria, had been tried in the Patriarch's court and found guilty of heresy, and Athanasius, in flagrant contravention of the canons, had been cruelly beaten in the Church of St. Sophia. The poor priests now appeared in Rome, loudly protesting their innocence, and appealing to the Pope for justice. Gregory, on his side, was glad to embrace an opportunity of proving, what he has distinctly stated in a letter to the Bishop of Syracuse, that "the Church of Constantinople was, beyond all doubt, subject to the Apostolic See." He accordingly wrote more than once to the Patriarch, demanding an explanation, but he received from John only an evasive

[1] *Epp.* v. 39, 41, 44.

reply, disclaiming all knowledge of the matter. Thereupon Gregory despatched a stingingly sarcastic letter, from which the following sentences are extracted[1]:—

"I am impelled to write to you, not only by reason of the importance of the matter in question, but also out of charity, since I have written several letters to my most holy brother, the Lord John, but have received no answer from him. Some layman surely wrote to me under his name; for, otherwise, if the letter I received was really his, I have been utterly mistaken in the opinion I have formed of him.[2] I wrote to you about the case of John and Athanasius, the latter of whom, although a priest, was scourged in your church, and your Most Holy Fraternity—if I am to believe the signature of the letter—replied that you did not know what I was writing about. Whereat I was exceedingly surprised, for I thought to myself—If his assertion is true, what can be worse than that the servants of God should be thus maltreated, and he, although so near, should know nothing about it? For what excuse can the shepherd make, if the wolf devours the sheep and he knows nothing about it? But if, on the other hand, your Holiness did know what I wrote about, and what had been done to the two priests, and yet answered, 'I know not,' what can I reply when the Truth says in the Scripture: *The mouth that belieth slayeth the soul*? Most holy brother, is this the result of all your fasting, that you wish by denials to conceal from your brother what you know has been done? Would it not be better that meat should go into your mouth for nourishment, than that false words should issue from it to deceive your neighbours? But God forbid that I should believe any such thing about your Holiness! Those letters bore your name, but I cannot think that they came from you. I wrote to his Holiness, the Lord John, but I suspect that the reply came from that young favourite of yours, who as yet knows nothing of God or the bowels of charity, who is commonly accused of infamous crimes, who by secret denunciations is daily plotting men's deaths, who fears not God nor regards man. Believe me, my brother, you must first correct this man, that

[1] *Epp.* iii. 52, dated July 593.

[2] "Quae si epistolae eius fuerunt, ego vigilans non fui, qui longe de eo aliter credidi, quam inveni." Is Gregory here playing on his own name—*vigilans*, Γρηγόριος?

by making an example of those who are about you, you may the better amend those who are afar. Do not listen to his words: he ought to be guided by the counsel of your Holiness, not your Holiness by his. If you persist in listening to him, I know that you cannot have peace with your brethren. As for me, I call my conscience to witness that I wish to quarrel with no man, but avoid it with all my might. Least of all do I wish to break peace with you, whom I greatly love, if, indeed, you are still the man I once knew. For if you do not observe the canons, and wish to overturn the decrees of the Fathers, I know not who you are.

"I am not acting from any love of ostentation; and if that young favourite of whom I spoke had not such preeminent influence for evil with your Fraternity, I should have waived the rights which by the canons of the Church are mine, and sent back the priests to you without delay, knowing that your Holiness would receive them kindly. Even now I say, either readmit these persons to their former rank and leave them in peace, or, if you will not do this, then, without further discussion, observe in their case the decrees of the Fathers and the regulations of the canons. If you adopt neither of these courses, although we have no wish to enter on a contest with you, we shall certainly not shrink from an encounter if you begin it.

"As for the scourging you inflicted, I need not say much on this subject in my letter, because I have sent my beloved son, Sabinian the deacon, to the court of my Sovereigns on the business of the Church, and he will discuss the matter with you thoroughly. If you do not wish to quarrel with us, you will find him ready to do whatever is reasonable. I recommend him to your Blessedness, trusting that he at all events may find in my Lord John the same person whom I knew when I was in the royal city."

The Pope's interference with the affairs of the Church of Constantinople gave great offence, and many even of Gregory's friends thought he ought not to have taken up the matter as he did. Narses the Patrician, for instance, wrote to assure him that John was desirous of observing the canons. But to such pleas and remonstrances Gregory replied with a vigorous assertion of the justice of his cause. He was determined, he said, to carry the matter through with the full force of his influence and

authority. If he found that the canonical rights of the Apostolic See were disregarded, God would show him what to do against those who contemned them.[1]

John himself, meanwhile, had been planning a countermove, by which he hoped to place the Pope in a position of serious embarrassment. The Empress Constantina had been building within the precincts of her palace a splendid new church in honour of the Apostle Paul. It was suggested to her by some persons unnamed, who had a grudge against the Pope —surely the wily Faster and his friends[2]—that the new foundation would gain additional sanctity and celebrity if some important relic of the Apostle, such as his head, were deposited there. Accordingly, Constantina was induced to write to the Pope, ordering him to send forthwith the head of St. Paul, or at any rate some portion of his remains, for deposition. The request occasioned Gregory much perplexity and distress. If he refused, he would probably offend the Empress, hitherto his staunch friend, and would certainly increase his own unpopularity at court. And yet he could scarcely avoid refusing. If the head of St. Paul were sent, a demand would doubtless follow for the body of St. Peter, and once possessed of such treasures, the Church of Constantinople could scarcely fail to arrogate to herself an increase of dignity as the guardian of the relics of the Apostles. It might even be claimed that, as the See of St. Peter had been transferred from Antioch to Rome, so now it might again be removed, with the seat of Empire, from Rome to Constantinople.

The shrewd device of John, however, did not turn out so successful as he had anticipated. Gregory certainly refused the request of the Empress, but he did so in such a manner as not to forfeit her regard.[3] No rupture, therefore, took place in the friendly relations between them, and John, after all, found himself obliged to give way in the affair of the two priests. He wrote, therefore, "a most sweet and pleasant

[1] *Epp.* iii. 63: "Caritati tuae breviter fateor, quia omni virtute et omni pondere eandem causam auxiliante omnipotente Deo exire paratus sum. In qua si videro sedi apostolicae canones non servari, dabit omnipotens Deus, quid contra contemptores eius faciam."

[2] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iii. 56.

[3] *Epp.* iv. 30. See above, Vol. I. pp. 279–282.

letter" to the Pope,[1] giving a full explanation. He stated that Athanasius had been condemned in consequence of an heretical book found in his possession, which book he forwarded, together with an enumeration of the heresies it contained; and he appointed proctors to maintain the charge of heresy against the priest John.

The case of the presbyters was considered, it seems probable, in the Roman synod of 595, but we have no record of what passed except in the letters which Gregory subsequently wrote to his friends at Constantinople. According to him, the accusers entirely failed to convict John of heresy, although they did their best to do so. Among other things, they accused him of being a Marcianist,[2] but, when asked what that heresy was, they were unable to give any account of it. However this may have been, the principle on which Gregory acted is perfectly clear. He had none of that restless suspicion which in all ages of the Church has made many men so ready to imagine the existence of heresy, and so eager to prove by any means that their suspicions are correct. When the minutes of the former trial were read over, it appeared that John had then loudly protested his orthodoxy and presented a written profession of his faith, but the judges had disbelieved his sincerity, and condemned him. In opposition to this spirit, Gregory set forth the maxim, that "If we will not believe a man who professes the orthodox faith, we cast a doubt on every man's belief, and deadly errors are generated by this unwarrantable severity"; and again, "Not to believe a man whose profession of faith is orthodox, is not to purge out heresy but to produce it." He ordered John to lay before the council the confession he had presented to the judges on the former occasion. It was found to be orthodox, and as the Patriarch's proctors were unable to bring proof of insincerity, "the sentence of the Pope and of the holy council illumined by the Divine grace" pronounced the accused acquitted. Shortly afterwards John was sent back to Constantinople, with letters to the Patriarch and the Emperor, informing them of the issue of the trial, and requesting that the returning presbyter should be kindly received and protected from all annoyances.[3]

[1] *Epp.* v. 44. [2] See below, p. 253, *n.* 1. [3] *Epp.* vi. 14–17.

The case of Athanasius was rather more complicated, for a careful examination of the book found in his possession had convinced Gregory of its heretical character. Its tone was, according to him, Manichaean. A difficulty further arose from the fact that the Patriarch, in his enumeration of the heresies, had quoted certain decisions alleged to have been promulgated by the Council of Ephesus, which Gregory could not find in the Roman records of the Council, and some of which seemed to him distinctly Pelagian. He therefore requested his friend Narses to send him the oldest copies of the acts of the Council that he could find in Constantinople, at the same time expressing his fear that the records had been falsified. "The Roman codices," he said, "are much more trustworthy than the Greek, for if we lack your acuteness, we have not your imposture."[1] The examination of the book was thus a work of time. At length, however, as Athanasius maintained that he had merely read the work, and was perfectly ready to condemn any statement in it contrary to the Catholic faith, and to obey the Pope's order never to read it again, and, as he handed in a written confession of belief, expressing in the strongest terms condemnation of all heresies and his firm adherence to the decrees of "the four holy universal synods" and of "the synod held in the reign of Justinian respecting the Three Chapters," Gregory decided that he was free from all stain of heresy, and gave him permission to return to his monastery and resume his former rank in it.[2]

These cases are extremely interesting, as illustrations of the claims put forward by the Apostolic See against the Church of Constantinople. That Gregory was acknowledged to be acting within his rights when he entertained the appeal of the presbyters and re-tried a case which had been already adjudicated in Constantinople, seems evident, not only from the absence of any protest against his action, but also from the fact that the

[1] *Epp.* vi. 14. Gregory says: "Existimamus quia, sicut Chalcedonensis synodus in uno loco ab ecclesia Constantinopolitana falsata est, sic aliquid et in Ephesina synodo factum est." The allusion is, of course, to the 28th canon of Chalcedon, which was not accepted by the Roman Church. On Gregory's difficulties about the acts of the "Ephesine Synod"—the document probably contained the acts, not of the General Council, but of the Latrocinium Ephesinum of 449 (see Lau *Gregor der Grosse* p. 82 *sqq.*)—compare *Epp.* vii. 31; ix. 135.

[2] *Epp.* vi. 62.

Patriarch sent letters and deputies to represent his side of the question to the Pope. On the other hand, it is by no means clear that the Patriarch further submitted to the decision of the Papal court. On the contrary, Gregory seems to have felt doubtful how his sentence would be received at Constantinople, for he thought it desirable, when he announced it to the Patriarch, to write also to the Emperor and other influential persons and interest them in the proceedings. We have, however, no record to warrant the suggestion that the sentence was not carried out.

Meanwhile the "Ecumenical Bishop" controversy had again broken out. In one of his letters concerning the case of John the presbyter, the saintly Faster, determined that Gregory should not have his own way in everything, adopted the irritating expedient of styling himself, "almost in every line," Ecumenical Patriarch. Nothing could have been more exasperating to the harassed, overwrought Pope. The intrigues of John against him, and his efforts to prejudice the minds of the Emperor and Empress, had already tried Gregory's temper to the utmost, and this new piece of wanton insolence (as he considered it) was more than he could bear. "I hope in Almighty God," he exclaimed,[1] "that the Supernal Majesty will confound his hypocrisy." Emperor or no Emperor, he was determined to assert himself. "For, since we can in no way be defended by the Greeks from the swords of our enemies, since for our patriotism we have lost silver and gold, slaves and raiment, it is too disgraceful that through them we should lose the Faith also. But to assent to that wicked word is nothing more nor less than to lose the Faith."[2] A budget of letters was despatched to Constantinople in the January or June of 595[3]; Sabinian the apocrisiarius was ordered to refrain from communion with the Patriarch; and all the influence possessed by the Pope in the East was exerted to the utmost to exterminate this "unspeakable word of pride."

The protest to John himself was described by Gregory

[1] *Epp.* v. 45.

[2] "In isto sceleste vocabulo consentire nihil est aliud quam fidem perdere." Cf. *ibid.* vii. 24: "Si hanc (causam) aequanimiter portamus, universae ecclesiae fidem corrumpimus."

[3] There is good MS. authority in favour of January; but Hartmann and Weise both accept the reading "Iuniarum."

as "a sweet and humble admonition," in which "honesty and kindness" were combined.[1] The Pope promised, however, that if it failed to produce an effect, he would send a second communication which the proud Patriarch would not relish.[2] Yet even the sweet and humble admonition can scarcely have been gratifying to so very eminent a saint as John the Faster. The epistle, which is far too long to give in detail, may be summarized as follows[3]:—

"You pretended to be anxious to avoid the patriarchate, but now you have got it you act as though you had canvassed for it. Having confessed yourself unworthy to be called a bishop, you now seek to be called the only bishop. You disregarded the admonitions of Pope Pelagius, you neglected my own. Though your office is to teach humility to others, you have not yet learnt yourself the elements of the lesson.

"My brother, love humility, and do not try to raise yourself by abasing your brethren. Abandon this rash name, this word of pride and folly, which is disturbing the peace of the whole Church. How will you face Christ at the last judgment, when by this sinful title you have tried to subject His members to yourself? 'Universal Bishop,' indeed! Why, you imitate Lucifer, who said: *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will be like the Most High.*

"Consider. Peter and Paul and Andrew and John were all set over particular communities, yet were all members under one Head. The saints before the Law, the saints under the Law, the saints under grace, all were members of the Lord's Body the Church, and not one of them ever wished to be called Universal. Yet you are so swollen with your own conceit, that you claim a title which no true saint ever presumed to bear.

"I know that you were egged on by evil advisers. Be on your guard against them. Be not deceived. Remember that *evil communications corrupt good manners.* When the old enemy cannot break into the citadel of a strong man's heart, he looks out for weak persons who are his associates, and uses them as ladders wherewith to scale the ramparts. Through a woman Adam fell, through his wife Job was tempted. Then let the false friends, the weak secular persons that surround you, perish in their own flattery!

[1] *Epp.* v. 37, 45. [2] *Ibid.* v. 45. [3] *Ibid.* v. 44.

"It is the last hour. Pestilence and the sword rage throughout the world, nation rises against nation, the globe itself is shaken, the earth gapes and swallows up cities with their inhabitants. All that was foretold is coming to pass. The king of pride is at hand, and (dreadful to relate) bishops are serving in his army. Yes, bishops, who were appointed to be generals of humility, are raising the neck of pride.

"Our Lord, that He might bring us back to the way of life through humility, deigned to exemplify His teaching in His own Person, saying: *Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.* It was for this that the Only-begotten Son of God took the form of our weakness; for this the Invisible became not only visible, but despised; for this He bore the insults, the mockings, the agony of the Passion—that God by His humility might teach men not to be proud. The pride of the devil was the origin of our perdition, the humility of God was the means of our redemption. Our enemy, having been created among all things, desired to appear exalted over all; our Redeemer, while remaining great over all, deigned to become little among all. What excuse, then, can we bishops offer, if, having received a place of dignity through the humility of our Redeemer, we yet imitate the pride of His enemy?

"By this unspeakable title the Church is rent asunder and the hearts of all the faithful are offended. It is written: *Charity seeketh not her own;* but your Fraternity seeks far more than your own. Again, it is written: *In honour preferring one another;* but you strive to take away the honour of all when you unlawfully seek to usurp it for yourself alone. Already more than once I have reproved your sin through my representative, and now I write myself. If you despise this reproof, I must have recourse to the Church, as the precept of the Gospel commands (Matt. xviii. 15–17).

"I speak out of love. I am not angry with you, but sorry. But in this case I am bound to prefer the commands of the Gospel, the ordinances of the canons, and the welfare of the brethren to the person even of one whom I greatly love."

Such was the purport of the letter which the Roman apocrisiarius handed to John, and the biting severity of it must have been as gall and wormwood to the ambitious Patriarch. But the Pope saw clearly that his rival was not the sort

of man to be turned from his course by any remonstrance, however emphatic. If he was to be forced to give up the detestable title, some stronger pressure must be brought to bear upon him. Such pressure could only proceed from the Emperor himself, and Maurice had already once taken the Patriarch's side, and, as Gregory must have felt, was only too likely to do so again. Nevertheless, since Maurice was the only man whom John would listen to, Gregory addressed to him an urgent appeal, so deliberately inviting the interference of secular authority in a matter purely ecclesiastical.[1]

"My Most Religious Lord—who has received his sovereignty from God—besides the other weighty cares of Empire, watches with true spiritual zeal over the preservation of Christian charity among bishops. For he justly and truly considers that no man can exercise his earthly rule aright unless he knows how to deal with things divine, and that the peace of the State depends upon the peace of the Universal Church. And, indeed, what power of man, what might of fleshly arm, would dare to raise a sacrilegious hand against the height of your most Christian Empire, if all the priests with one accord strove, as they ought, to win the favour of the Redeemer for you, both by their prayers and by the goodness of their lives? Or what savage race would cruelly advance to put the faithful to the sword, if the lives of us, priests in name but not in truth, were not weighed down by most wicked deeds? But while we neglect what befits us, and absorb ourselves in what befits us not, we make our sins the allies of the barbarians. Our faults weigh down the strength of the State and whet the swords of the enemy. And what excuse can we offer when with our sins we burden God's people, of whom we are the unworthy rulers, when our example contradicts our preaching, when our deeds teach wickedness, and only our voice proclaims what is good? Our bones are worn away with fasting and our minds are fat with pride; our body is clad in vile raiment, and in elation of heart we surpass the purple. We lie in ashes and think high thoughts. Teachers of humility yet generals of pride, we hide the wolf's fangs behind the sheep's visage. What, then, is the end of it all? We persuade men, indeed, but to God we are manifest. Therefore He has inspired my Most Religious Lord to

[1] *Epp.* v. 37.

repress external wars by first establishing peace within the Church, and by deigning to recall the bishops' hearts to concord. This, indeed, is what I wish, and for myself give glad obedience to your most serene commands. But since the cause is not mine, but God's, since not I alone am disturbed, but the whole Church with me, since the holy laws, the venerable synods, yea, the very ordinances of our Lord Himself, are set aside by the invention of a certain proud and pompous phrase, let my Most Religious Lord cut away the sore, and, if the patient resists, bind him with the fetters of Imperial authority. For by this restraint you relieve the State, by this excision you provide for the prolongation of your rule.

"It is clear to every one who knows the Gospel that the care of the whole Church has been committed to the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles. For him it is said: *Peter, lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep.* To him again it is said: *Behold, Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat, and I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not. And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* To him once more it is said: *Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church,* and the rest. Behold, he receives the keys of the kingdom of heaven; to him is given the power of binding and loosing; to him the care and the primacy of the whole Church is committed; and yet he is never called the Universal Apostle. But that most holy man, my fellow-bishop John, wishes to be called the Universal Bishop. I am compelled to exclaim, O tempora! O mores!

"Behold, all parts of Europe are given up to the power of the barbarians; cities are destroyed, fortifications razed, provinces depopulated; no tiller remains in the field; the idolaters daily rage and prevail for the destruction of the faithful—and yet the bishops, who ought to be weeping, stretched in sackcloth on the ground, are devising for themselves names of vanity, and glory in new and profane titles! Most Religious Lord, am I defending my own cause, am I vindicating a wrong done to myself alone? No; it is the cause of Almighty God, the cause of the Universal Church.

"We know of a truth that many bishops of the Church of Constantinople have fallen into the whirlpool of heresy, and have become not only heretics, but heresiarchs." Gregory quotes as instances Nestorius and Macedonius, and proceeds: "If, then,

any bishop of that Church assumes the title Universal, the Universal Church must be overthrown with the fall of the Universal Bishop. God forbid! Far from all Christian hearts be that blasphemous name, by which one bishop madly arrogates all honour to himself, taking it away from the rest of his brethren! It is true that out of respect for St. Peter, chief of the Apostles, this title was offered to the Roman Pontiff by the venerable Synod of Chalcedon.[1] But none of the Pontiffs ever consented to use this unique title, lest all bishops should be deprived of the honour due to them by the bestowal of so peculiar a distinction upon one. How is it, then, that while we do not desire the glory of this title even when it has been offered to us, another to whom it has not been offered has presumed to seize it?

"He therefore who will not condescend to obey the canons must be coerced by the commands of my Most Religious Lords. He must be restrained, since he is injuring the holy Universal Church, since he is puffed up in heart, since he delights in a special title of honour, since by taking this title to himself he sets himself above the dignity of your Empire. Behold, we are all offended through this thing. Let, then, the author of the offence return to a right life, and all quarrels of priests will cease. I, for my part, am the servant of all priests,[2] so long as they live as priests should. But as for him who, puffed up by vain-glory, lifts his neck against Almighty God and the statutes of the Fathers, I trust in God that he shall not bend my neck to him—no, not with swords.

"I am anxious to obey you, but I fear to be found guilty of

[1] Gieseler notes on this: "Gregory was mistaken in believing that at the Council of Chalcedon the name Universalis Episcopus was given to the Bishop of Rome. He is styled *οἰκουμενικὸς ἀρχιεπίσκοπος* (Mansi, vi. 1006, 1012), as other Patriarchs also. But in another place the title was surreptitiously introduced into the Latin acts by the Roman legates. In the sentence passed on Dioscorus, actio iii. (Mansi, vi. 1048), the council say, 'Ο *ἁγιώτατος καὶ μακαριώτατος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος τῆς μεγάλης καὶ πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης Λέων*: on the contrary, in the Latin acts which Leo sent to the Gallic bishops (Leonis *Ep.* 103, *al.* 82) we read: 'Sanctus ac beatissimus Papa, caput universalis Ecclesiae, Leo.'" Gregory, however, repeats his fabulous story more than once (*Epp.* v. 37, 41, 44; viii. 29). It is true that the Roman Pontiffs had never hitherto claimed the title themselves, though it had been applied to them by others.

[2] "Ego cunctorum sacerdotum servus sum." See below, p. 280, note on the title "Servus servorum Dei."

negligence in the terrible judgment of the Most High. Wherefore I beg my Most Religious Lord either to judge the matter himself, according to the petition which my responsalis Sabinian will present, or else to persuade my Lord John to give up his design at last. If he yields to the most righteous judgment of your Piety, or to your gracious commands, we shall render thanks to Almighty God, and rejoice in the peace granted to the whole Church through you. But if he persists any longer in this strife, we already know for certain the judgment of the Truth concerning him: *Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased.* And again it is written: *The heart is exalted before destruction.* In obedience to my Sovereigns' command, I have written affectionately to my fellow-bishop, and have humbly admonished him to refrain from his desire of vain-glory. If he is willing to listen to me, he will find me a loving brother; but if he continues in his pride, I already see what will happen, because he has for his adversary Him of whom it is written: *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*"

The main arguments advanced by Gregory in this long and eloquent letter may be stated briefly as follows. The title "Universal Bishop," having been claimed by no Apostle, Saint, or Pope, was novel and unheard of, and its assumption was accordingly contrary to the usage of the Church. Further, being a contravention of the canons and precepts of the Gospel, which enjoin humility, it broke the laws of the Church. It also gave general offence, and so disturbed the peace of the Church; it deprived the other patriarchs and bishops of the honour due to them, and so infringed the dignity of the Church; and lastly, assuming that the Universal Church would share the fall of a Universal Bishop, it endangered the security and truth of the Church. By such arguments Gregory might, with a show of justice, profess himself the champion of God, St. Peter, and the Church Universal. But when he went on to claim to be the defender of the Emperor himself, and asserted that the Patriarch's desire for the title was evidence of a wish to exalt himself at the expense of his royal master,[1] Maurice can scarcely have been deceived by so palpable an absurdity. That the pliant, well-schooled bishops of Constantinople should ever dare to put a slight on their Imperial patrons, and that the

[1] "Qui honori quoque vestri imperii se per privatum vocabulum superponit."

independent bishops of Rome should ever play the part of protectors of the princes against the designs of their own ecclesiastics, was a conception too ridiculous to take in anybody. Maurice was doubtless amused at Gregory's anxiety for "the dignity of the Empire." At the same time, his superstitious fears may possibly have been awakened by the Pope's suggestion that the disasters which were befalling the Empire were not unconnected with the injury inflicted on St. Peter in his successor. For though Gregory took care to use general expressions, it is quite clear that he meant to insinuate that the pride of the Patriarch was the real cause of the afflictions which Providence was sending on the Roman world.

To the Empress Constantina Gregory wrote yet more freely,[1] inasmuch as he had heard from Sabinian that she was by no means friendly to the pretensions of the Patriarch. "I beseech you, let no man's hypocrisy prevail against the truth. For there are some who, according to the saying of the Preacher, *by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*, who wear vile raiment, but are puffed up in their hearts. They affect to despise everything in the world, yet they seek to acquire everything that is of the world. They confess themselves unworthy before all men, yet they must needs get titles which make them pass as worthier than all.

"My Lord the Emperor, instead of rebuking the pride of John, has endeavoured to turn me from my purpose—me, the champion of the Gospels and the canons. He has ordered me to keep the peace. I know that my most holy brother is trying to persuade the Emperor of all manner of things, but I trust that my Lord will not suffer himself to be cajoled against reason and his soul's welfare.

"The pride of my brother is a sign that the times of Antichrist are near at hand. He imitates him who, scorning the joys of community with the legions of angels, endeavoured to gain the height of solitary preeminence, saying: *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the North; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.* I beseech you, therefore, by Almighty God, do not let your times be polluted by the perverse pride of one man. Do not consent to

[1] *Epp.* v. 39.

this wicked title, and put me to shame. For though the sins of Gregory deserve such treatment, yet the Apostle Peter has not sinned that he should be so humiliated in your reign. Wherefore again and again I implore you by Almighty God to seek and keep the favour of the blessed Apostle, as your ancestors have done who ruled before you. And do not, for the sins of me his unworthy servant, suffer his honour to be diminished in your city, seeing that he is able, not only to aid you in all things here, but also to remit your sins hereafter.

"It is now seven and twenty years that we have been living in this city beset by the swords of the Lombards. How much we have to pay them daily from the Church's treasury, in order to live among them at all, it is impossible to compute. I will merely say that, as at Ravenna the Emperor has a paymaster for the First Army of Italy, who defrays the daily expenses as need arises, so at Rome for such purposes I am the paymaster. And yet this Church which at one and the same time is incessantly spending so much money on the clergy, on the monasteries, on the poor, on the people, and moreover on the Lombards, must be further burdened with the affliction of all the Churches, which groan bitterly over the pride of this one man, although they dare not speak out openly on the matter."

In addition to his letters to the authorities at Constantinople, Gregory addressed a lengthy appeal to the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, entreating them to give him their support in the struggle.[1] He described, in language which has a genuine ring, how grieved he was that John, who used to be so modest, so generally beloved, who had been so devoted to almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, should have been so neglectful of humility as by a pompous title to claim dominion over all the members of the Body of Christ. He repeated his previous arguments, and implored his correspondents to join in resisting an arrogant pretension which was a sure sign of the approach of Antichrist. Let them not fear the anger of the Emperor; "for he fears Almighty God, and will do nothing contrary to the laws of God and the most sacred canons." Nor need they dread breaking the peace of the Church, since that peace was most truly kept when justice was combined with charity, and hatred of men's vices with love for their persons. It was the

[1] *Epp.* v. 41.

duty of a good bishop, not only to protect the ship of the Church from the waves which battered her from without, but also to clear away the bilge-water that accumulated within. "Make a brave stand," he concluded; "be firm; never receive or write any letters in which that lying title occurs. Keep all the bishops subject to your care from the taint of this adulation, that the whole Church may recognize you as Patriarchs, not only in the goodness of your actions, but also in the authority of the truths which you deliver. And if perchance any adversities befall us in consequence, we ought to show by a unanimous resistance even unto death, that we care for no private interests which involve an injury to the Church at large."

It is evident from all the above letters that Gregory believed that very serious issues were involved in the concession or refusal of the title claimed by John, and it may be well, before going further, to inquire what was the precise meaning which he attached to the word "Universal" or "Ecumenical." Now, in the first place, the phrase "Ecumenical Bishop" might, as the later Greeks pointed out to Anastasius the Librarian, signify nothing more than a bishop who "ruled a certain portion of the world inhabited by Christians. For the Greek word οἰκουμένη may mean in Latin not merely the world, from the universality of which the word comes to mean 'universal,' but also a habitation or habitable place."[1] In this sense the title is merely an honorary appellation to which any patriarch, metropolitan, or bishop might rightfully lay claim. In the second place, it might signify a bishop who "held the primacy of the whole world"[2] (*universi orbis praesulatum*), as chief of all the bishops. If such is taken to be the meaning, then the assumption of the title by John amounted to claiming for the See of Constantinople the primacy hitherto enjoyed by Rome. Such a claim could not, of course, be tolerated by the Pope. But to Gregory the title meant even more than this. For, in the third place, it might be argued that the word "Universalis" was equivalent in meaning to the word "Unicus," and the designation "Universal Bishop" might thus be interpreted as sole or only true bishop in the world. It must not be thought that John himself ever really professed to be in this way the sole bishop,

[1] Anastasius *Praef. in Septimam Synodum* (Labbe, vii. pp. 30, 31).
[2] *Ibid.*

the source of the episcopate. Nothing was further from his intentions. But Gregory believed that his claim was capable of this interpretation, and this accounts for much of the violence of his language respecting it. Had the Patriarch of Constantinople been indeed acknowledged as sole bishop, then it would have been true to say that the rest were not really bishops[1]; that the members of Christ were being subjected to an alien head; that the fall of the Church would coincide with the fall of the only bishop; that the title was blasphemous, and signalized the coming of Antichrist.

Such was Gregory's interpretation of the title—no doubt in itself ambiguous—claimed by the Patriarch. But to the Easterns, who were accustomed to high-flown compliments and names of honour, it had no such tremendous significance. On the contrary, the Pope's agitation was by them attributed entirely to a feeling of jealousy. They reflected that John was, after all, only reviving a name which had been applied to his predecessors even in official documents, which had never been objected to until quite recently, which was still willingly conceded by the clergy of Eastern Christendom, and which could not be surrendered without a humiliating submission to the Bishop of Rome. They had no sympathy with Gregory's standpoint, and no patience with his passionate complaints. Even the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, friends of the Pope, seem to have thought his objections captious. Eulogius maintained a discreet silence about the controversy,[2] and Anastasius sent a letter which, "like a bee," carried not only the honey of compliment, but also a sharp sting of reproof. He warned Gregory not to yield to envy or give occasion of offence for no valid reason. The whole matter, he maintained, was of no importance.[3] And this, indeed, appears to have been the general opinion throughout the East. The Pope, it was thought, was making a prodigious stir about a trifle which was of no importance whatsoever.

In the mean time, on the 2nd of September 595—shortly after the delivery of Gregory's letters—the celebrated Faster

[1] *Epp.* ix. 156: "Nam si unus, ut putat, universalis est, restat ut vos episcopi non sitis."

[2] *Ibid.* vi. 58.

[3] *Ibid.* vii. 24.

died,[1] leaving behind him a reputation of almost superhuman virtue, and bequeathing as an inheritance to his successors the title which had occasioned such heart-burning. The Emperor, to whom the controversy had given much anxiety, hesitated a long while before nominating his successor. He was determined to prevent a schism between the Eastern and Western Churches, which would seriously have affected the political situation in Italy; yet he was opposed to any concession which would diminish the prestige of the See of Constantinople. He decided, therefore, to appoint as Patriarch some one who would be acceptable to the Pope, but, at the same time, would have sufficient force and ability to resist Roman encroachment. And just such a man he thought he had found at length in Cyriacus, formerly Oeconomus of the Church of Constantinople. This ecclesiastic had none of those aggressive qualities which had distinguished his predecessor. He was a pious, painstaking, unambitious man, diffident as regards his own abilities, and anxious only to live quietly in friendship with his neighbours. His good nature had made him generally popular. The clergy of Constantinople, who perhaps had found the austere sanctity of John a little difficult to live with, hailed his appointment with enthusiasm, and at his consecration the officiating bishops burst forth into shouts: *This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*[2] Gregory, too, who had known the Oeconomus at Constantinople, had a favourable opinion of him,[3] and was inclined to appreciate his character all the more by reason of its contrast with that of the obnoxious John. At the same time, although naturally gentle and retiring, and anxious to avoid embroiling himself in disputes with his neighbours, Cyriacus was not the man to neglect the interests of his Church or tamely to submit to be despoiled of a dignity which he regarded as rightfully his. Hence Maurice congratulated himself on having chosen a bishop who, if any one, might heal the breach between the rival Churches, without making any dishonourable surrender of his own prerogatives.

[1] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iii. 60 writes rather spitefully: "Subita morte defungitur, et cuius ambitiosam superbiam totus capere mundus vix poterat, in unius sepulchri angustia facile collocatur."

[2] *Epp.* vii. 7.

[3] *Ibid.* vii. 4.

To leave nothing undone which might conduce to peace, the Emperor wrote to Gregory, commanding him to receive with kindness the responsales who were carrying to Rome the synodical letter of the new Patriarch, and urging him to make no further disturbance about an "idle name." So far as concerned the responsales, Gregory was perfectly willing to obey the mandate. He realized that it would be the height of indiscretion to refuse to hold communication with Cyriacus while the latter was still new to his office, and before he had had time to disclose his real sentiments and intentions respecting the matter in dispute. Accordingly, when in the autumn of 596 the two ambassadors, George and Theodore, arrived in Rome, the Pope treated them "with more than customary honour," even inviting them to assist him at mass; "for" —so he wrote—"although my deacon ought not to minister in the holy rite to one who has either himself committed the sin of pride or has failed to check that sin in others, yet there is no reason why his envoys should not serve me in the mass, since, through God's protection, I have not fallen into that error."[1] On the other hand, Gregory could not consent to remain silent about the "proud and profane title." "My Religious Lords have said, in the commands they sent me, that there ought not to be any ill feeling between us on account of an idle name. But I beg your Imperial Piety to reflect that some idle things are quite harmless, while others are exceedingly injurious. For instance, when Antichrist comes and calls himself God, will not that be very idle, and yet exceedingly pernicious? If we look merely at the number of syllables in the word, they are few enough, but if we regard the weight of iniquity, there is a world of mischief. Therefore I say with confidence that whoever calls himself or desires to be called Universal Bishop, is in his pride a forerunner of Antichrist, because he proudly sets himself up above all others."[2]

Gregory was pained to find—although he can scarcely have expected otherwise—that in the Patriarch's synodical letter the "name of pride" was still adhered to. He accordingly wrote, at first urging him in somewhat indirect fashion to remove all occasion of offence,[3] afterwards frankly requiring him to drop

[1] *Epp.* vii. 30; cf. vii. 31.

[2] *Ibid.* vii. 30.

[3] *Ibid.* vii. 4.

the title.[1] "As for me," he said, "I invoke Jesus as witness to my soul that I wish to give no offence to any one from the highest to the lowest. I desire all men to be great and honoured, but the honour paid to them must not detract from that which is due to Almighty God. For whosoever covets to be honoured against God, will not be deemed worthy of honour by me. But that you may know how well inclined I am towards your Blessedness, I have sent my son, Anatolius the deacon, to the feet of our Most Religious Lords, to make clear to you all that I desire to do injury to no one in this matter, but simply to guard the humility which is pleasing to God and the peace of the Holy Church."

Gregory's appeals, however, were ineffectual. Cyriacus proved no less intractable in this matter than John himself, and public feeling in the East was entirely on his side. How completely the Eastern bishops misunderstood the Pope's motives may be illustrated from the conduct of Eulogius of Alexandria, who, after a long silence, being pressed by Gregory for some expression of his opinion, wrote at last to say that he would refrain from addressing the Patriarch of Constantinople by the title, in obedience to the "commands" of Gregory, whom he styled Universal Pope. To this Gregory replied[2]: "Your Blessedness has taken care to inform me that, in writing to certain persons, you no longer use those proud titles which have sprung from the root of vanity, and you add these words to me, 'as you commanded.' I beg you will never let me hear that word again. For I know who you are and who I am. In position you are my brother, in character my father. I gave, therefore, no commands, but only endeavoured to point out what I thought was desirable. I do not find, however, that your Holiness has taken the trouble to remember correctly what I tried to impress upon your memory. I said you ought not to use such a title in writing either to me or to any one else; yet now, in your last letter, notwithstanding my prohibition, you have addressed me by the proud title of Universal Pope. I beg your Holiness, whom I love so well, not to do this again. For what you give to another unreasonably is taken away from yourself. And I desire advancement, not in titles, but in character. Nor do

[1] *Epp.* vii. 28. [2] *Ibid.* viii. 29.

I consider that anything is an honour to me, by which my brethren lose the honour that is their due. My honour is the honour of the Universal Church, my honour is the united strength of my brethren. Then, and then only, am I truly honoured when no one is denied the honour which is justly his. But, if your Holiness calls me Universal Pope, you deny that you are yourself that which you say I am universally. God forbid! Far from us be the titles which inflate men's pride and deal a wound to charity!"

The controversy soon became stagnant. Gregory still uttered protests at intervals, but nobody seems to have paid them much attention. In 599, learning that the bishops of Eastern Illyricum, who were subject to his own patriarchal jurisdiction, had been summoned to attend a synod at Constantinople, he wrote to remind them that nothing done in the synod could have any force "without the authority and consent of the Apostolic See," and to warn them, on pain of excommunication, not to sanction the assumption of the objectionable title by the Patriarch of Constantinople.[1] The year before his death he wrote once more to Cyriacus, imploring him to give up his pretension and restore peace to the Church.[2] But the Patriarch remained unmoved, and when Gregory died his rival was still acknowledged throughout Eastern Christendom as the Ecumenical Bishop.

We may dismiss this controversy in a few words. When Phocas succeeded Maurice on the throne of Empire, he is said to have issued a decree that "the Apostolic See of St. Peter, that is the Roman Church, should be the head of all the Churches."[3] But in spite of this Imperial confirmation of the Roman primacy, the Patriarchs of Constantinople continued to struggle against the Roman claim, and the Emperor Heraclius in his laws again refers to them as Ecumenical Bishops. At length the Popes, despairing of the abolition of the title, decided

[1] *Epp.* ix. 156.

[2] *Ibid.* xiii. 43.

[3] *Lib. Pont. Vita Bonifacii III*: "Hic obtinuit apud Phocam principem, ut sedes apostolica B. Petri apostoli caput esset omnium ecclesiarum, id est, ecclesia Romana, quia ecclesia Constantinopolitana primam se omnium ecclesiarum scribebat." Cf. Paul. Diac. *Hist. Lang.* iv. 36; Baronius, ad ann. 606. Phocas hated Cyriacus because he resisted his attempt to drag the fallen Empress Constantina and her daughters from their sanctuary. See Theophanes *A. M.* 6098; Cedrenus, vol. i. p. 711.

to encourage its application to themselves. And within a century of Gregory's death the Bishops of Rome began to style themselves and allow others to style them Ecumenical Bishops or Ecumenical Popes, which title they have never since repudiated. And thus strangely the controversy has ended—the Popes themselves consenting to be honoured with the very title which was characterized by a Pope, a Doctor, and a Saint, as foolish, proud, pestiferous, profane, a diabolical usurpation, and a mark of the forerunner of Antichrist.[1]

So much for Gregory's struggle with the Patriarchs of Constantinople. The controversy thus oddly terminated leads us to inquire—What exactly was Gregory's view respecting his own position? What, in his opinion, was the relation of the Papacy towards the Churches? Now, Gregory has been accursed of insincerity, in that while disclaiming the title Universalis, he yet claimed all the title implied. This charge, however, is misleading, and is not true. As has been already pointed out, Gregory interpreted "universalis" in the sense of "unus"; and he certainly never pretended to be the sole bishop in Christendom. On the other hand (though abhorring the title which might mean "sole bishop"), he never for an instant denied, or made any pretence of denying, that the Pope was the Primate and chief of Christian bishops.

There can be no doubt that Gregory claimed a primacy, not of honour merely, but of authority, in the Church Universal. To him the Apostolic See was "the head of all the Churches,"[2] and its bishop was called to undertake "the government" of the Church.[3] The reason alleged for this preeminence was that the Roman Bishop was the successor and vicar of St. Peter, chief of the Apostles,[4] to whom had been committed the "cura et principatus" of the whole Church, and on the stability of whom, as on a rock, the Church had been firmly

[1] The title appears as self-assumed in the *Liber Diurnus*, and is frequent after the seventh century. See *Dict. Chr. Ant.* ii. p. 1664. "Et cui post Christum Iesum hoc nomen magis poterat aptari quam successoribus Petri?" Leo. IX. *Epp.* 100, § 9 (Migne, cxliii.).

[2] *Epp.* xiii. 50: "Sede apostolica, quae omnium ecclesiarum caput est." Cf. xiii. 40: "Illud autem ammonemus, ut apostolicae sedis reverentia nullius praesumptione turbetur. Tunc enim membrorum status integer manet, si caput fidei nulla pulset iniuria."

[3] *Ibid.* v. 44: "Indignus ego ad ecclesiae regimen adductus sum."

[4] *Ibid.* ii. 46.

established.[1] "Wherefore, although there were many Apostles, yet in respect of the principate the See of the Prince of the Apostles alone has grown strong in authority."[2] As the successor, then, of the chief of the Apostles, the Pope claimed a divine right of primacy.[3] The decrees of councils would have no force "without the authority and consent of the Apostolic See."[4] Appeals might be made to the Pope against the decisions even of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and such decisions might be reversed by sentence of the Papal court.[5] All bishops, moreover, even the patriarchs, were subject to correction and punishment by the Pope, if guilty of heresy or uncanonical proceedings. "If any fault is discovered in a bishop, I know of no one who is not subject to the Apostolic See," Gregory wrote.[6] "If any of the four patriarchs had done such a thing," he wrote again to a bishop who had disobeyed his orders,[7] "such contumacy could not have been passed over without the gravest scandal." "As regards the Church of Constantinople," he said once more,[8] "who can doubt that it is subject to the Apostolic See? Why, both our Most Religious Lord the Emperor, and our brother the Bishop of Constantinople continually acknowledge it."

While thus claiming for the Roman See an authority which was coextensive with Christendom, Gregory, nevertheless, taught that such authority ought not to be exercised so as to interfere with the canonical rights of the several bishops. "As I defend my own rights," he wrote to the Bishop of Carthage,[9] "so I am careful to observe the rights of the different Churches." And again,[10] "Unless each single bishop has his own jurisdiction reserved to him, what else is done but that ecclesiastical order is confounded by us through whom it ought to be preserved?" He seems to have regarded the See of Peter as everywhere supreme only in the sense of possessing the right to correct all transgressors and to ensure that the independent bishops

[1] *Epp.* v. 37; vii. 37. [2] *Ibid.* vii. 37.

[3] *Ibid.* iii. 30: "Apostolica sedes Deo auctore cunctis praelata constat ecclesiis."

[4] *Ibid.* ix. 156. A Pope could also by his own authority annul the acts of a synod (*ibid.* v. 39, 41, 44).

[5] See above, p. 203 *sqq.*

[6] *Ibid.* ix. 27. [7] *Ibid.* ii. 50. [8] *Ibid.* ix. 26.

[9] *Ibid.* ii. 52. [10] *Ibid.* xi. 24.

should not exceed the limits of their canonical jurisdiction. Thus, in the very sentence in which he claimed that all guilty bishops were subject to the Apostolic See, he added the words, "But when no fault requires it to be otherwise, all bishops according to the principle of humility are equal."[1] Hence, he even went the length of protesting against Eulogius's phrase, "sicut iussistis." "I beg you will never let me hear that word again. I know who you are and who I am. I gave no commands, but only tried to point out what I thought was desirable."[2] The whole literature of the "Ecumenical" controversy proves clearly that nothing was further from Gregory's thoughts than the sanctioning of any kind of ecclesiastical despotism which should exalt one bishop at the expense of the rest, even though that bishop happened to be the successor of St. Peter. "I desire no honour," he said, "which shall detract from the honour which belongs to my brethren."[3] It is interesting to compare the modern form of the doctrine of the Papal supremacy with the ideal upheld in theory and in practice by the greatest of the Popes.

It should be further observed that in the heat of the "Ecumenical" controversy, Gregory put forward a remarkable, and, so far as I know, an entirely original theory of the See of Peter, which would scarcely have commended itself to St. Leo. He maintained that whereas Antioch had been the See of Peter before he came to Rome, and whereas Alexandria had become the See of Peter through his disciple and vicar St. Mark, therefore Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria conjointly represented the See of the Prince of the Apostles, and shared equally in the primacy that belonged to it as such. Thus we find him writing to Eulogius of Alexandria[4]: "Who can be ignorant that the holy Church has been established in the solid strength of the Prince of the Apostles, whose name is derived from the firmness of his mind, he being called Petrus from *petra*? And to him it was said by the voice of the Truth: *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* And again it was said to him: *And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* And once more:

[1] *Epp.* ix. 27. Compare Gregory's remarks in *Reg. Past.* ii. 6.

[2] *Ibid.* viii. 29.

[3] *Ibid.* viii. 29. Compare ii. 50: "Mihi iniuriam facio, si fratrum meorum iura perturbo."

[4] *Ibid.* vii. 37.

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep. Wherefore, though there were many Apostles, yet in respect of the principate the See of the Prince of the Apostles alone has grown strong in authority, which, though in three places, is yet the See of one. For he himself exalted the See in which he deigned to rest and end his life. He himself adorned the See to which he sent his disciple as evangelist. He himself established the See over which he presided for seven years. Since, then, it is the See of one and one See, over which by Divine authority three bishops now preside, whatever good I hear of you, that I impute to myself. And if you believe anything good of me, impute that to your merits, for we are one in Him who says: *That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.*" So again he wrote to the same correspondent[1]: "There is something which binds us in a peculiar way to Alexandria, and compels us to have a special love for it. For every one knows that the blessed Evangelist Mark was sent to Alexandria by St. Peter, his master. You and I, therefore, are bound together in this unity of the master with his disciple, so that I seem to preside over the See of the disciple through the master, and you over the See of the master through the disciple." Similarly, writing to the Patriarch of Antioch, Gregory concluded with a phrase found in the longer recension of St. Ignatius's *Epistle to the Ephesians*, adding: "These words you see I have taken from your letter and inserted in my own, that your Blessedness may understand that the holy Ignatius is not yours alone, but ours also. For just as his master, the Prince of the Apostles, belongs to us both in common, so it is right that the disciple of that Prince should be both ours and yours."[2] And again, "Lo! in your old age your Blessedness labours under many tribulations; but remember in whose chair you sit. Is it not his to whom it was said: *When thou art old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not?*"[3] But it is unnecessary to multiply quotations.[4] The theory, it seems likely, commended itself to Gregory, less on account of its own merits than as a means of winning the adherence of the Apostolic Patriarchs in the controversy with the See of Constantinople, which had

[1] *Epp.* vi. 58.
[2] *Ibid.* v. 42.
[3] *Ibid.* viii. 2.
[4] See *ibid.* viii. 28; x. 14; xiii. 44.

itself no claim to be considered Apostolic. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the divided principality and triple See, emanating as it does from a Bishop of Rome, is sufficiently striking.

(2) Passing now from Gregory's struggles with the Patriarchs of Constantinople, we must take some account of his relations with other Churches and churchmen in the East.

Allusion has already been made to Anastasius and Eulogius, the friendly Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria. With both of these prelates Gregory continued on most cordial terms, writing them affectionate letters and interchanging gifts. His friendship for Anastasius dated from the time of his own sojourn in Constantinople. This Patriarch, who had been unjustly removed from his see by the Emperor Justin, was then residing as a private person in the royal city, and was thus brought into contact with the Papal Nuncio.[1] The two men became attached to one another, and when Gregory afterwards was made Pope he exerted himself to further the interests of his unfortunate friend. He was convinced that the deposition of the latter was uncanonical. "To me," he wrote,[2] "you are always that which you became by the gift of Almighty God, and not that which the will of man would have you to be." Nevertheless, while thus expressing his conviction that the will of the Emperor could not override the laws of justice and the canons of the Church, Gregory shrank from taking the extreme step of declaring the deposition null and void, and refusing to recognize Anastasius's successor Gregory—a man of excellent character—as the legitimate Patriarch of Antioch. He accordingly compromised by addressing his synodical letter to both the bishops—to the actual occupant of the see and also to the ex-patriarch.[3] In the interests of the latter, moreover, he drew up a petition—which, however, in the end was never presented—praying Maurice to permit Anastasius to wear the pallium, and to come to Rome, if he wished, and reside in the Lateran[4]; and it was doubtless owing in great part to his influence at court that, in 593, when the see of Antioch again fell vacant, the Emperor was persuaded to reinstate Anastasius in his former dignities. When this good news reached Rome, the Pope expressed, in his metaphorical style, his unbounded delight that the river of his

[1] See above, Vol. I. p. 155.
[2] *Epp.* i. 25.
[3] *Ibid.* i. 24.
[4] *Ibid.* i. 27.

friend's eloquence, which had been diverted from its proper channel, was now again permitted to flow through the dry valleys of Antioch, and to cause the parched souls there to bring forth abundant fruit of good deeds. "Alike with heart and mouth, from the bottom of my soul, I render due praise to Almighty God, and rejoice, not with you only, but also with all those who are committed to your care."[1] From this time, until the death of Anastasius, the two bishops continued to correspond with one another, and although Anastasius was unable to regard the "Ecumenical" controversy in quite the same light as the Pope did, the friendship remained unbroken.

An even more valued correspondent was Eulogius, patriarch of Alexandria. This man was one of the most talented of Gregory's contemporaries. He was at once a polished courtier, a profound theologian, an eloquent preacher, and a skilful disputer with heretics. Like Paschasius of Naples, he had a hobby for shipbuilding, and in this case Gregory was willing to gratify, with frequent presents of timber,[2] a taste which he privately deemed unworthy of a bishop. At the same time, he was glad to make use of his friend's acquaintance with Eastern theology and to take his opinion on difficult problems. Of the Pope's inquiries a single example may be quoted, which curiously illustrates Gregory's ignorance of Ecclesiastical History. It seems that the Patriarch Cyriacus, in his synodical letter, had anathematized among others the heretic Eudoxius. Of this noted Arian leader Gregory had never heard, nor could he find an account of him in the Latin books. He learnt, indeed, that the Eudoxians had been condemned by a canon of the Council of Constantinople, but these canons had not been received at Rome, and no copies of them were extant in the Roman libraries.[3] He further learnt that Eudoxius was mentioned in Sozomen's *History*; but this work also was not accepted by the Roman Church, "because

[1] *Epp.* v. 42.

[2] *Ibid.* v. 58; vii. 37; xiii. 45.

[3] *Ibid.* vii. 31. "Romana autem ecclesia eosdem canones vel gesta synodi illius hactenus non habet nec accepit, in hoc autem eandem synodum suscepit, quod est per eam contra Macedonium definitum." The Benedictine editors note on this: "Constantinopolitanos canones ad disciplinam spectantes et praesertim iii non acceperat Romana Ecclesia, quod illo canonem vi Nicaenum violari censeret. Eadem de causa Chalcedonenses canones impugnaverat Leo I, quod nempe xxviii primarum sedium termini a Nicaenis patribus constituti convellerentur."

it contains many false statements, and is too laudatory of Theodore of Mopsuestia, saying that he was a great teacher of the Church up to the day of his death."[1] Gregory therefore applied for information to Eulogius,[2] who forwarded him extracts in condemnation of Eudoxius from the books of Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, and Epiphanius, with the testimony of whom the Pope professed himself entirely satisfied. "We acknowledge Eudoxius to be manifestly slain, at whom such heroes have cast so many darts."[3]

With the Patriarch of Jerusalem Gregory held little communication. He endeavoured, indeed, to accommodate a long-standing quarrel between him and a monastery called Neas, the monks of which appear to have been guilty of irregularities. Gregory made an appeal for peace both to the patriarch and to the abbat. "I know," he wrote to the latter,[4] "that you are both of you abstinent, both learned, both humble. I know that you have salt in yourselves through the teaching of the heavenly Word. It remains, therefore, that through the grace of charity you keep peace with each other with all your hearts. I say this because I love you both exceedingly, and am much afraid lest the sacrifice of your prayers should be marred by any dissension between you." To the Patriarch Isaac, who succeeded Amos in 601, in reply to his synodical letter, Gregory sent an exhortation, part of which may be quoted as an instance of his manner of acknowledging such communications.[5] "I have read your Fraternity's letter, and I give great thanks to God for that, while the pastors of His flock are changed, He still preserves unchanged the faith which He once for all delivered to the holy Fathers. The great preacher says: *Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Whoever then, with the love of God and his neighbour, holds fast the faith which is

[1] Gregory probably refers here to the Latin Tripartite History compiled by Cassiodorus from the works of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. The allusion to Theodore of Mopsuestia, complained of by Gregory, will be found here (x. 34): "Theodorus, Mopsuestiae quidem episcopus, sed totius doctor ecclesiae, dum contra universam cohortem haereticorum fortiter dimicasset, terminum vitae sortitus est." In the extant Sozomen there is no such encomium.

[2] *Epp.* vii. 31.

[3] *Ibid.* viii. 29.

[4] *Ibid.* vii. 29.

[5] *Ibid.* xi. 28; cf. ix. 135.

in Christ, has laid his foundation in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man. And where Christ is the Foundation we may hope that good works will follow as the building raised upon it. For He who is the very Truth says Himself: *He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber; but he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.* And shortly afterwards He adds: *I am the door.* He then enters into the sheepfold by the door who enters in by Christ; and he enters in by Christ who believes and preaches the truth with regard to Christ, as the Creator and Redeemer of the human race, and who conforms his life to the doctrine which he preaches, and who undertakes his high office, not from desire of mere transitory glory, but in order to bear its burdens as a duty. Such a man watches with active care over the sheepfold committed to him, lest evil men with evil words should rend the flock of God, or evil spirits should lay waste the flock by the destructive allurements of vice. But in all these matters may He Himself instruct us, who for our sakes became man, who condescended to be made what He Himself had made. May He pour the Spirit of His love into me who am so weak, and into you whose charity is so strong. May He open the eyes of our hearts that we may be thoroughly watchful and may exercise the duty of supervision with all carefulness."

One other notable Eastern ecclesiastic, with whom Gregory had some correspondence, may be mentioned. This was the Emperor's kinsman, Domitian, bishop of Melitene and metropolitan of Lesser Armenia, an eloquent prelate, of whose diplomatic talents Maurice had been glad to avail himself in negotiating with Chosroes of Persia. Domitian had endeavoured to convert the king, but Chosroes, though interested in the Christian religion,[1] could not be brought to the point of embracing the Faith. Gregory tried to console the archbishop for his want of success by assuring him that although his efforts had been fruitless so far as Chosroes was concerned, he would not miss the reward of his own zeal. "The Ethiopian comes out of the bath as black as he went in, yet the bathman gets

[1] See the stories in Theophylact *Hist.* iv. 10; v. 1, 2, 13, 14; Evagrius *Hist.* vi. 16, 20. Fredegarius, *Chron.* 9, reports a fable concerning his conversion. But see Gregory's letter above.

his pay."[1] With the same bishop Gregory engaged in a friendly controversy respecting the allegorical interpretation of the thirty-fourth chapter of Genesis. The Pope, who piqued himself on his skill in this kind of exposition, defended his own interpretation as more harmonious with the context, but at the same time expressed his willingness to accept the rendering of Domitian. "In the interpretation of Holy Scripture," he wrote, "whatever is not opposed to sound faith ought not to be rejected. For just as from the same gold jewellers fashion necklaces and rings and bracelets for ornament, so from the same Scripture different expositors, understanding it in innumerable ways, make as it were different ornaments, which yet all serve to adorn the heavenly bride."[2]

From the theological disputes and minute argumentations about points of dogma, which were so congenial to the Eastern mind, Gregory kept himself as far as possible aloof. He realized that the greater heresies, if not quite dead, were at least no longer openly advocated and ventilated. "In the reign of our orthodox Emperor," he wrote,[3] "heretics do not venture to express their evil sentiments in public, though their hearts are boiling over with the madness of their perversity." The heretics, being thus reduced to silence, had ceased to be a source of danger to the Church, for they had no unity among themselves, and consequently no substantial strength. Gregory even thought that God was perhaps using them as a means of instructing His Church, since the faithful, "being taught by contradictions, learn more thoroughly to understand Him." He had, as I have frequently remarked, little sympathy with the Eastern passion for searching out heresies and detecting subtle shades of unorthodox meaning in statements which apparently were Catholic and straightforward, and he well knew the danger of raising a public stir about small errors which would otherwise be harmless and unnoticed.[4] Nevertheless, he did not hesitate to correct perverse opinions when such were brought under his notice. Thus, for instance, learning that the responsales

[1] *Epp.* iii. 62. This is clearly a popular proverb. Another occurs in the same letter: "De Mauricio autem bene dicitis, ut in actione eius ab umbra statuam cognoscam, id est, in minimis maiora perpendam."

[2] *Ibid.* iii. 62.

[3] *Ibid.* ix. 135; xi. 28.

[4] *Ibid.* xi. 27. See also above, Vol. I. p. 141; Vol. II. p. 207.

of Cyriacus had maintained that when Christ descended into hell He released from punishment all who would then believe on Him, Gregory exerted himself to confute their opinion, asserting that "those alone were delivered who both believed that He should come and kept His commandments in their lives."[1] Another doctrine against which he argued was that of the Agnoetae, who taught that the human knowledge of Christ was limited. Some Jerusalem monks had consulted Gregory's apocrisiarius at Constantinople on this subject, and he in turn had requested the Pope to express an opinion. Gregory put forward some arguments in favour of the omniscience of the human mind of Christ, supporting them with several citations from the Latin Fathers. Before long he received a treatise compiled by Eulogius of Alexandria against the Agnoetae, and found to his great satisfaction that in this matter the Greek Fathers were in agreement with the Latin, so that "amid a diversity of tongues there was no diversity of spirit."[2] Gregory's views on this subject, however, will be examined in another place.[3]

Concerning the manner in which returning heretics should be readmitted into the Catholic Church, Gregory laid down a rule, in response to an inquiry from the bishops of Iberia how they were to deal with those who abjured Nestorianism. The Pope ordered that those who had been already baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity were not to be baptized again, but, when admitted into the Church, were either to be anointed with the chrism or to receive imposition of hands, or to make simply a profession of faith. In the West, Arians were admitted by imposition of hands,[4] in the East by the chrism, while Monophysites were only required to make a profession of faith. In the case, therefore, of Nestorians who had been properly baptized, any one of these methods of admission was allowable. Those, however, who had not been baptized in the name of the Trinity,

[1] *Epp.* vii. 15 : "Descendens quippe ad inferos solos illos per suam gratiam liberavit, qui eum et venturum esse crediderunt et praecepta eius vivendo tenuerunt."

[2] *Ibid.* x. 14, 21.

[3] See Book III. pt. i. § 3 (1).

[4] In the West also Arians were sometimes readmitted by chrism. Cf. Greg. Tur. *H. F.* ii. 31 ; iv. 27 ; v. 39. The Arians, on the other hand, wished to rebaptize Catholics (*ibid.* ii. 2 ; v. 39). Cf. the relaxation of the Arian rule by Leovigild (Joh. Biclar. ad ann. 580, ed. Mommsen).

were to be baptized again, since their former baptism was invalid. Repentant Nestorian clergy were to be permitted to retain their Orders, provided that they made a public profession of the true belief concerning the nativity of Christ, anathematized Nestorius with all other heretics, and promised faithful adherence to the decrees of "those venerable synods which the whole Church receives." [1]

As a specimen of the sensible advice which Gregory gave to those who were unjustly accused of holding heretical opinions, I may refer to a letter written by him to Theoctista, the Emperor's sister, who, to quote the Pope's expression, was assailed by "a storm of calumny." Gregory, who fully believed in the orthodoxy of the princess, expressed astonishment that the words of men could agitate a diligent student of that Apostle who said: *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* He pointed out that her affliction was sent by the goodness of God, being intended partly to correct any feeling of pride that might be engendered through excessive praise, and partly to elevate the character, since without trial there could be no patience. But though calumnies ought to be borne with equanimity, they should nevertheless, if possible, be rebutted. "When we can tranquillize the minds of foolish people and bring them back to a healthy state, we certainly ought not to allow them to be scandalized. You, therefore, should of your own accord invite the leaders of the party to a private interview, and you should make them a statement, and anathematize in their presence those perverse opinions which they think you hold. And if, as is said, they suspect that the anathema is insincere, you should take an oath as well, that you never have held, and do not now hold, the opinions imputed to you. Do not think it degrading for you to give them this satisfaction; nor, because you are of the Imperial family, suffer any feeling of scorn for them to exist in your mind. For we are all brethren, created by the power and redeemed by the blood of the same Emperor, and we ought therefore never to despise our brethren, however poor and lowly they may be." [2]

[1] *Epp.* xi. 52.

[2] *Ibid.* xi. 27. The same kind of consolation and advice was given to Palladius, a presbyter of Mount Sinai (*ibid.* xi. 1).

There was one so-called heresy, however, which Gregory did everything in his power to combat and stamp out. This was simony, which appears to have been rampant in all parts of the East. Gregory, indeed, writing to the newly consecrated Patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem, complained that he had been told that "in the Churches of the East no one receives Holy Orders without a payment of money." "If this is so," he continued, "let your first offering to Almighty God be the suppression of the simoniacal heresy in the Churches which are subject to you. For, to say nothing of anything else, what sort of lives are those men likely to lead in Holy Orders, who were promoted to those Orders not for merit, but for money?"[1] Even in Alexandria, in the patriarchate of the energetic and zealous Eulogius, Gregory learned with sorrow that this scandal prevailed. A young doctor who had studied medicine in the Alexandrine schools assured the Pope that an acquaintance of his own, of infamous character, had got himself ordained deacon by bribery, and that such cases were of common occurrence. Gregory at once sent an expostulation to the Patriarch. "For the absolution of your soul," he wrote,[2] "for the increase of your reward, that your works may be thoroughly perfected in the sight of the tremendous Judge, you ought to make haste utterly to extirpate and eradicate from your most holy see (which is also ours) the simoniacal heresy, which was the first to arise in the Church." The Eastern clergy, perhaps, considered that the Pope exaggerated the matter. At any rate, there is no evidence that they paid any attention to his appeals.

In addition to his letters to the prominent ecclesiastics of the East, Gregory wrote occasionally on religious subjects to lay persons who cultivated his friendship or asked for his advice. Correspondence, however, was rendered difficult by his ignorance of the Greek language and the scarcity of good interpreters both at Rome and at Constantinople. The Pope was not without apprehension that his words would be falsified or interpolated, and even when assured of the honesty of the interpreters he complained that by their literal rendering they mangled the sense. Nevertheless, he sent letters to his friends from time to time, principally, it may be conjectured, to such as understood the Latin language. Among these

[1] *Epp.* ix. 135; xi. 28.

[2] *Ibid.* xiii. 44.

was Rusticiana, a wealthy Roman lady who had taken up her residence at Constantinople, and entered with a zest, which Gregory considered rather reprehensible, into the enjoyment of the various pleasures of the gay capital. At one time, indeed, Rusticiana tore herself away from her beloved city to make a hasty pilgrimage in the Holy Land, but the indecent hurry of her visit drew down on her the following rebuke from the Pope[1]: "I have received your Excellency's letter, and have read with pleasure the account of your journey to Mount Sinai. Believe me, I should like to have gone with you. But certainly I should not have wished to return as you did. For indeed I find it difficult to believe that you have been to the holy places and seen many of the fathers there, since, if you had really seen them, you could not, I think, have returned so quickly to Constantinople. But the love of that city is so firmly rooted in your heart, that I suspect that your Excellency did not give your whole attention to those holy places and things which you saw with the bodily eye. May Almighty God mercifully enlighten you with His grace, may He give you wisdom and the power to feel how fleeting are the things of time. For even as we write these words time is hastening on, the Judge is drawing near, the day is close at hand when we shall be compelled to loose our hold of the world which now we refuse to give up." Later on the Pope tried to persuade this worldly lady to undertake another journey and pay a visit to St. Peter's tomb at Rome.[2] Rusticiana, however, remained deaf to his admonitions. She sent some hangings for the Apostle's shrine, requesting that they might be carried to the church with a solemn litany, and she endeavoured to appease the Pope with a very humble letter, in which she more than once spoke of herself as Gregory's "handmaid." To this phrase, curiously enough, the Pope objected. "Through the burdens of the episcopate," he wrote, "I have been made the servant of all. Why, then, do you call yourself my handmaid, when even before I became a bishop I was entirely your own? I beseech you by Almighty God, never again let me find this word in your letters."[3]

[1] *Epp.* iv. 44; cf. ii. 27. For pilgrimages to the Holy Land, cf. Greg. Tur. *H. F.* v. 22; *Mirac.* i. 1. Some interesting information will be found in the *Dict. Chr. Ant.* "Pilgrimage."

[2] *Epp.* viii. 22.

[3] *Ibid.* xi. 26

My final quotation is from a letter to Theodore, the Emperor's physician, and it affords an admirable example of Gregory's tactful manner of reminding his friends of their religious obligations.[1] "Since he loves most who most presumes on his love, I have a complaint to make against the gracious mind of my most glorious son, the Lord Theodore, because he has received from the Holy Trinity the gift of intellect, the gift of wealth, the gift of mercy and love, and yet he is ceaselessly absorbed in secular business, he is occupied with the constant ceremonies of the court, and he neglects the daily reading of His Saviour's words. Yet what is Scripture but God's letter to His creatures? Now, if you were somewhere and received a letter from your earthly Emperor, you would doubtless not pause a moment, you would not rest, you would not sleep, until you had learned what this earthly Emperor had written to you. The Emperor of heaven, the Lord of men and angels, has sent you His letters for the saving of your life, and yet, my glorious son, you do not read them diligently. Study them, I pray you, meditate daily on your Creator's words. Learn from God's words to know God's heart, that you may yearn more ardently for things eternal, that your mind may be inflamed with greater longing for the joys of heaven. For your soul will rejoice in a deeper rest hereafter in proportion as it now knows no rest from the love of God. That you may be able to do this, then, may Almighty God pour upon you His spirit of consolation. May He fill your mind with His presence, and so relieve it from all care."

[1] *Epp.* v. 46.

CHAPTER XI

GREGORY'S RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT. THE END

THE pontificate of Gregory, as has been already noticed, marks an epoch in the history of the Papacy, inasmuch as the Pope at this time first appears endowed, not merely with spiritual authority, but also with temporal power. For the first time the Bishop of Rome is in a real sense master of Rome, provides supplies, directs defensive operations, concludes treaties, issues his orders to military and civil officials. He is landlord of huge estates which bring him in vast revenues. Thousands of slaves, of peasants, of ecclesiastics, are prepared to do his bidding. His agents are everywhere, and send him information of all that is going forward. His court, like that of Ravenna or Constantinople, is a centre of political plot and intrigue. He conducts negotiations with kings and queens and emperors almost as though he were himself an independent power, and his words and wishes carry weight. "The servant of the servants of God" is the sovereign of an empire partly spiritual and partly temporal, which is destined before long to supplant in the West the falling empire of Augustus, under the shadow of which it has grown up.

It may be interesting to consider briefly the manner in which this powerful Pontiff—virtual ruler of Rome and of large tracts of territory in Italy and the islands—bore himself in relation to the officials of the Government with whom he came in contact, and towards the Emperor whose subject he was.

First, then, in respect of the Government officials, it is to be observed that Gregory did not draw any sharp line of demarcation between Church and State, although he did emphatically mark out distinct spheres which, within the State, were assigned

respectively to the ecclesiastical and the secular rulers. In other words, Gregory never opposed Ecclesia to Respublica, but only to Saeculum, or the world; yet within the unified Church and State he recognized distinct offices and authorities, which it was his aim to keep, as far as possible, separate and independent. In his view a secular ruler ought to confine himself strictly to his secular government, taking action in ecclesiastical affairs only when invited to do so in the interests of ecclesiastical law and order. Thus Gregory had no objection to invoke the aid of the secular arm for the suppression of pagans, schismatics, and heretics, or even to enforce discipline among the monks and clergy.[1] But in such cases the officials were regarded as acting as the servants of the Church against the enemies of the Church, and any spontaneous interference on their part with the internal concerns of the Church itself, any attempt, for instance, to influence episcopal elections or encroach upon the jurisdiction of the orthodox bishops, was promptly resented. The magistrates were to confine themselves to secular matters, and abstain from meddling in things ecclesiastical, except when called upon to do so in the interests of the Church.

On the other hand, Gregory had an equal objection to any interference of the bishops in such affairs as properly belonged to the province of the secular authorities. Thus, for example, learning that the Bishop of Naples had usurped certain rights connected with the gates and aqueducts of the city, which belonged to the municipal officers, he ordered that restitution should be made without delay.[2] Just as the Imperial officials were, as far as possible, to leave the discipline and work of the Church to its divinely appointed ministers, so the bishops ought, as far as possible, to leave the conduct of worldly affairs to those to whom the charge had been committed. Nevertheless, on certain occasions they were, in Gregory's opinion, bound to interfere. In fulfilment of their duty as guardians of Christian justice, they were obliged in conscience to resist any flagrant wrong, and to extend their protection to the poor, the weak, and the oppressed. Yet even in such cases the bishops must act with the utmost circumspection, and if they

[1] *Epp.* i. 72; ii. 29; iii. 59; iv. 7, 32; v. 32; viii. 4; xi. 12, 37; xiii. 36. It is the duty of the secular ruler to protect the Church and preserve the "pax fidei" (*Mor.* xxxi. 8).

[2] *Ibid* ix. 76; cf. ix. 47, 53.

exercised authority it must be only such as was forced upon them, such as they could not conscientiously refuse, and such as they would gladly lay aside when opportunity offered.

These general rules Gregory was careful to observe in his own dealings with the Imperial officials. To the utmost of his power he avoided any collision with them or any interference with them in the discharge of their duties. Yet when he was aware of any wrong-doing, he did not hesitate to take action. His attitude was exactly that which he recommended to his agent in Sicily, Peter the Subdeacon. "Let the nobles and the Praetor like you for your humility, and not dread you for your pride. Yet if you hear that they are doing any wrong to the poor, put away your humility at once and take a lofty tone. When they do well be always submissive to them, but when they do ill oppose them with all your might. So behave that your humility be not lax or your righteousness stiff, but let righteousness season humility, and humility make your righteous ardour gentle."[1] Although the tone of his letters to officials is usually suave and complimentary, Gregory had no scruple in speaking with masterful authority when it seemed necessary to do so, since he was convinced that he was "superior in place and rank" even to the Exarch himself.[2] His method of interfering was usually this. When the peccant official was of subordinate rank, a protest was sent to his superior. When the superior himself was in fault, Gregory first made a strong appeal to his good feeling and sense of right; afterwards, if such an appeal proved fruitless, representations were made to the authorities at Constantinople, even, if necessary, to the Emperor himself.

I will now quote, in illustration, two remarkable letters of remonstrance, of which one refers to the grievances of the provincials in the islands, the other rebukes an act of violence inflicted on an individual. In both cases the Pope stands forth boldly as the champion of justice and fair dealing, in

[1] *Epp.* i. 39*a*. Joh. Diac. *Vita* iii. 48: "Cunctorum iudicum cupiditates vel scelera Gregorius quasi camo frenoque pontificii sui, validissimis auctoritatibus restringebat, et si quos dulciter a pravitate corrigere non valebat, scriptorum suorum redargutionibus publicabat."

[2] *Epp.* ii. 45: "Movere vos non debet praefati excellentissimi viri Romani patricii animositas, quia nos quantum eum loco et ordine praeimus, tantum si qua sunt eius levia tolerare mature et graviter debemus."

opposition to the corrupt or tyrannical proceedings of the officers of the Government.

The first of these letters was addressed to the Empress Constantina. In the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, the Imperial administration appears to have been abominably corrupt. The officials were, many of them, utterly shameless, and perpetrated all manner of cruelties and illegalities without making even a decent attempt to conceal their malpractices. The miserable provincials became the helpless prey of these wolves. In Sardinia, particularly, their sufferings were almost unendurable. The edicts by which the Emperor had formerly redressed their grievances were disregarded and violated by those whose duty it was to enforce them. Double tribute was illegally exacted. Disputes were settled by brute force instead of by law. Rich and poor alike were subjected to violence. Clergymen were beaten and imprisoned, and monks and nuns cruelly persecuted. Such a scandalous state of things aroused all Gregory's righteous indignation. He wrote and remonstrated with the Duke of Sardinia and the Exarch of Africa (to whom the Duke was responsible).[1] He ordered his responsalis at Constantinople to make representations to the Emperor.[2] And finally, since none of these measures produced any effect, he sent a strongly worded protest direct to the Empress. The letter supplies us with some curious particulars relative to the malpractices of corrupt officialism, and at the same time indicates incidentally how difficult it was for the oppressed provincials to obtain any redress otherwise than through the powerful intervention of the Church.[3]

"Whereas I know that the thoughts of my Most Serene Lady are turned towards the heavenly fatherland, and to the life of her own soul, I feel strongly that I should commit a sin were I to abstain from saying what the fear of God requires me to suggest.

"When I found that there were many heathen in the island of Sardinia, who, following the evil custom of heathenism, offered sacrifices to idols, while the bishops of the island were not active in preaching the Redeemer to them, I sent thither one of the bishops of Italy, who, by God's help, has brought many heathen to the faith. He has, however, informed me of

[1] *Epp.* i. 59. [2] *Ibid.* i. 47. [3] *Ibid.* v. 38.

an impious custom in the island. He says that those who sacrifice to idols pay a sum of money to the governor for leave to do so. And when some of them were baptized and ceased to offer sacrifices to idols, the same governor, even after their baptism, compels them to pay the sum which they used to give for permission to sacrifice. And when the bishop reproved him, he said that he had promised so large a sum of money to procure his appointment to his office,[1] that he could not possibly make it up without resorting to such expedients as this.[2]

"The island of Corsica, too, is oppressed with such heavy exactions, levied besides with so much extortion, that the people can hardly meet them even by selling their children. Hence it comes to pass that those who own estates in the island forsake the Holy Empire, and are compelled to take refuge with the infamous Lombards. For what outrage can the barbarians inflict on them more cruel than to force them by oppression and extortion to sell their own children?

"In the island of Sicily we are informed that Stephen, the chartulary of the maritime district,[3] is guilty of such injustice and oppression, in seizing the possessions of private individuals and claiming their lands and houses for the State, without any action at law, that a large volume would not suffice to record all his evil deeds.

"I beg my Most Serene Lady to carefully consider these facts and to still the groans of the oppressed. For I do not believe that these doings have ever come to your ears. Had they done so, they would surely not have continued until now. But they ought to be brought under the Emperor's notice at a favourable moment, that he may remove this great, this grievous weight from his own soul, from his Empire, and from his children. I know, indeed, that he will say that whatever money is collected from these islands is sent back to us for the expenses of Italy. But I answer that he ought to still the grief of the oppressed within his Empire, even though less money be sent to Italy in consequence. It may be that the reason why the large sums

[1] "Suffragium." Gussanvillaeus says: "Suffragium hic usurpatur pro pecunia, quae suffragatoribus aulicis datur promittiturve honoris adipiscendi causa." Compare Just. *Novel.* 8.

[2] See above, p. 150.

[3] On this official see Hartmann's note *in loc.*

spent in this country do so little good, is that they have been acquired in a sinful manner. Let my Most Serene Sovereigns, then, give orders that nothing be taken wrongfully. For I am convinced that, even though less be paid, yet the interests of the State will be greatly advanced; and even if we should suffer from a diminution of the revenue, it is certainly better that we should lose this temporal life than that you should be hindered in attaining the life eternal. Only think. What must be the thoughts, what the feelings, of parents, when they sell their children to save themselves from torture? You who have children of your own should know how to pity the children of others. I trust, therefore, that it will be sufficient for me to have made this brief statement, lest, if your Piety were unaware of what is being done in these provinces, I should be punished by the severe Judge for the sin of my silence."

Such is the noble protest made by Gregory on behalf of the oppressed islanders. Not less remarkable is the second letter to which reference has been made—a remonstrance against a wrong inflicted on a single individual. The case was as follows.

About the year 598 a certain high official, the ex-consul Leontius, was sent from Constantinople to examine the accounts of persons who had recently held office in Italy and the islands. Among those whose proceedings were to be inquired into were Gregory late Prefect of Rome, Crescentius Vicar of Rome, and Libertinus, who for five years had been Praetor of Sicily. So soon as the advent of Leontius was announced, Gregory and Crescentius adopted the expedient, common with suspected officials, of taking asylum in a church; but on receiving from the Pope a guarantee that they would meet with fair treatment, they at length consented to obey the summons of Leontius, and stand their trial in Sicily.[1] Meanwhile, Libertinus, the third of the trio, had been arrested in Sicily, and although he produced strong letters of recommendation from the Pope, he was found guilty of embezzling the public funds, was heavily fined, and also scourged. In consideration of Gregory's interest in the case, some of the documents produced at the trial were forwarded to Rome for his inspection, among them being a bond signed by Libertinus, in which, to secure the Praetorship, he had promised

[1] *Epp.* ix. 4, 55, 182.

to pay such a sum of money as he could not possibly have raised except by defrauding either the provincials or the Treasury. The Pope, who at this time was too ill to read the documents himself, handed them over for examination to the officials of his chancery, and, on receiving their report, wrote later on a letter to Leontius, which has justly been considered one of the most admirable productions of his pen.[1]

He began by reminding the ex-consul that he never gave a recommendation to any one without expressly stipulating that favour should be shown to the petitioner only within the limits prescribed by reason and justice. In the present case he had simply asserted the notorious fact that Libertinus had earned the gratitude of the whole province by his behaviour as Praetor. If the charges against him were true, his conduct had certainly been extremely blameworthy; but, on the other hand, it was said that Leontius, in inspecting the accounts, had refused to make allowance for various sums of money which had really been expended in accordance with the Emperor's orders. Of the merits of the case, therefore, Gregory was unable to form a decided opinion. Had he been thoroughly convinced that Libertinus was innocent, he would have addressed a protest to Leontius, and if that had been insufficient, he would have reported the matter to the Emperor. But in his present uncertainty he would say no more on the subject of the condemnation.

There was, however, one part of the affair in respect of which the Pope felt no doubt whatever. The punishment had been severe beyond all measure, and about this Gregory wrote with unusual emphasis and indignation. "I think, and I always shall think, that if Libertinus in any way defrauded the State, the penalty should have been inflicted on his property, and not on his person. When free men are scourged—to say nothing of the fact that Almighty God is offended, to say nothing of the fact that your own fair fame is sadly stained—the glory of our Most Religious Emperor's reign is altogether obscured. For there is this difference between the kings of the nations and the Roman Emperor, that the former have slaves for their subjects, the latter free men.[2] And therefore, in

[1] *Epp.* xi. 4.

[2] "Hoc enim inter reges gentium et imperatorem Romanorum distat, quia reges gentium domini servorum sunt, imperator vero Romanorum dominus

all your acts, your first object should be to maintain justice, your second to preserve a perfect liberty. You ought to value the liberty of those whom you are appointed to judge as jealously as though it were your own; and if you would not be wronged yourself by your superiors, you should guard with respect the liberty of your inferiors. Perhaps you will plead that public frauds cannot be detected without scourgings and tortures. Well, I might admit that plea were it not my Lord Leontius who is involved in the case. For those who are too active in the use of brute force are generally those who are deficient in intelligence and command of language. But you cannot offer any such excuse. And therefore, after a careful examination of the reports you have received and of the statements you have made, I am convinced that it is needless for you to have men scourged, when, by God's help, you might effect everything by words alone."

The letter concludes with a vigorous exhortation. "My glorious son, in dealing with the matter which has been committed to you, strive in the first place to please Him on whom all things depend, and in the next place to secure by your utmost zeal the interests of our Most Serene Sovereign. For indeed I feel that when a matter has been committed to you by him you cannot neglect it without sin. But since by the grace of Almighty God you have sufficient wisdom to examine men's accounts with vigilance and minute accuracy, and yet at the same time to render the judgment of God more favourable towards yourself by showing mercy, so, whenever anger takes hold of you, subdue it, conquer yourself, wait till your wrath is past and you are tranquil again, and then judge as seems to you best. For in punishing evil-doers anger should follow reason, not precede it; it should come behind Justice as her handmaid, and not rush insolently to the front. Behold, my glorious son, the love which I bear both to God and to you has induced me to send you this brief statement of all that I have felt and all that I have heard. If you are wise, you will give long consideration to my short letter, and will endeavour speedily to

liberorum." This sentiment is repeated by Gregory in his letter to Phocas, xiii. 34. Cf. Joh. Diac. *Vita* iii. 47, 48: "Libertatem uniuscuiusque hominis contra iudicum insolentias liberis vocibus defendebat. Cunctorum iudicum cupiditates vel scelera quasi camo frenoque pontificii sui, validissimis auctoritatibus restringebat."

correct whatever is displeasing to God. May Almighty God protect you with His heavenly grace, may He guard you in this world from evil actions and from wicked men, and in the world to come in His own presence give you the happiness of the holy recompense in the eternal fatherland."

Enough has been said to illustrate Gregory's manner of intervening on behalf of the weak and oppressed. In the two letters quoted above, the Pope's love of fair play and his hatred of every kind of tyranny and wrong are particularly apparent. These characteristics of his were universally recognized, and frequent appeals were made to him by those who were, or imagined that they were, the victims of injustice. At one time a guild of soap-boilers requested his protection against an official who was causing them annoyance[1]; again, he was invited to support the municipality of Naples in a claim to possess rights over certain islands[2]; again, a high official, threatened with prosecution, placed himself under his protection[3]; or, once more, the Prefect of Italy applied to him for help in compelling an obstinate bishop to submit to arbitration on a matter in dispute.[4] In all such cases Gregory acted promptly, without fear or favour, never hesitating to oppose, if necessary, persons in power, being convinced, as he himself expresses it, that "to restrain the violence of laymen is, not to attack, but to support the law."[5] Perhaps it was natural under the circumstances, considering how many instances of violence and wrong were brought to his notice, that Gregory's opinion of official persons and official life was not a high one. He was only too well aware of the corruption which had spread through all the grades of the official hierarchy, and in one of his letters he remarks that he knew only one man who, after holding the office of Prefect, retired with untarnished honour.[6] Hence he was very unwilling that persons in whom he was interested should take service under the Government, and he made a practice of dissuading them from doing so to the best of his ability. One such dissuasive appeal, addressed to a certain Andrew, is perhaps worth quoting.[7]

"Whereas you have expressed a wish that I should recommend you to our Most Serene Sovereign the Emperor for some

[1] *Epp.* ix. 113. [2] *Ibid.* ix. 46. [3] *Ibid.* i. 35.
[4] *Ibid.* i. 36. [5] *Ibid.* iii. 5. [6] *Ibid.* ix. 6. [7] *Ibid.* vii. 26.

office, I really am greatly grieved, because I always thought that your goodness of character would lead you in a different direction. I have known many men employed in the service of the State, who complain bitterly that they have no time for thought and repentance; and why, I wonder, do you wish to be thus involved? Why, my noble son, do you not reflect that the world is near its end? Day by day, all things are driven onward, and we are brought nearer to the trial we shall have to endure before the eternal, the terrible Judge. What, then, ought we to think of but His coming? Our life is like a voyage: the voyager may stand, or sit, or lie, but all the time he is going on as the ship may bear him. So also are we; for, sleeping or waking, silent or talking, still or in movement, willing or unwilling, every day, every moment, we are drawing near the end. And when our last day shall come, where will be all those things which we are now seeking with so much care and heaping together with so much anxiety? Neither honours nor riches, then, which come to an end, should be the objects of our desire. If we long for any blessings, let us fix our hearts on those which will be ours eternally. If we fear any evils, let us shrink from those which the wicked have to bear eternally.

"But when a man is employed in the service of our Most Religious Sovereign, how greatly is his mind absorbed by the pursuit of earthly favour! and, when that is once gained, how great is his fear lest it should be lost! Consider, then, what a grievous thing it is for a man to be wearying himself with longing for prosperity, or to be trembling for fear of adversity. I therefore advise your Greatness to adhere to your former intention, and to retire ere long to some pleasant retreat, where you may lead a peaceful and quiet life, where you may have time for the study of Holy Scripture, where you may meditate on God's words and inflame your heart with the love of eternity, and do good according to your means with the property you possess, and look forward with hope to the everlasting kingdom as your reward for doing good. Thus to live is to be already a partaker in the life which is eternal.

"I say this, my noble son, because I love you greatly. And as you are drifting into a stormy sea, I throw out my words like ropes to draw you back to shore. If you allow yourself thus to be drawn, you will learn, as you rest upon the shore of

peace, what evils you have escaped and what joys you have acquired."

In dealing with the officials of the Government, Gregory's work was comparatively easy. Conscious as he was of the superiority of his own rank, holding that every magistrate who was betrayed into wrong-doing was rightfully subject to correction by the Church, he was able to act without fetter or embarrassment according as his conscience prompted. All that was wanted in such cases was certainty as regards what was right, and tact in the treatment of offenders. In dealing with the Emperor himself, however, the difficulty was infinitely greater. For, since the time of Constantine, the Emperor was regarded as invested with a certain spiritual character and authority.[1] He was acknowledged, at least by those who considered him orthodox, to have the right of taking a prominent part in ecclesiastical affairs, of summoning councils, issuing edicts, proscribing heresy, and imposing the true faith on his subjects by his sovereign authority. His person, acts, and letters were characterized as "sacred"; his office was a Divine creation; his authority was delegated from God Himself. Whatever may have been the language of distinguished Fathers of the Church when the Emperors were unfavourable to them, it is clear that in general the Emperor was considered to be endowed with a sacred authority which it was a positive sin to contemn or disobey.

Now, this reverence for the Imperial Majesty was inculcated by no one more emphatically than by Gregory the Great. In

[1] Euseb. *De Vita Constant.* i. 44: Οἷά τις κοινὸς ἐπίσκοπος ἐκ Θεοῦ καθεσταμένος. *Ibid.* iv. 24: Ἔνθεν εἰκότως αὐτὸς ἐν ἑστιάσει ποτὲ δεξιούμενος ἐπισκόπους, λόγον ἀφῆκεν, ὡς ἄρα εἴη καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπίσκοπος. Ὧδε πη αὐτοῖς εἰπών ῥήμασιν ἐφ' ἡμετέραις ἀκοαῖς. Ἀλλ' ὑμεῖς μὲν τῶν ἔσω τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν ἐκτὸς ὑπὸ Θεοῦ καθεσταμένος ἐπίσκοπος ἄν εἴην. Ἀκόλουθα δ' οὖν τῷ λόγῳ διανοούμενος, τοὺς ἀρχομένους ἅπαντας ἐπεσκόπει, προὔτρεπέ τε ὅση περ ἂν ἡ δύναμις τὸν εὐσεβῆ μεταδιώκειν βιόν. Compare the assent at the synod of Constantinople, A.D. 448: Πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ βασιλεῖ (Mansi, vi. 733). Later Greek Emperors claimed a priestly character. Thus in 655 the abbat Maximus was asked, "Ergo non est omnis Christianus imperator etiam sacerdos?" (Mansi, xi. 6); and Leo the Isaurian in 730 wrote to Gregory II, βασιλεὺς καὶ ἱερεύς εἰμι (Mansi, xii. 976). The Emperors made their oblations in person in the sanctuary (Conc. Quinisext. A.D. 692, c. 69); and at first had their throne side by side with the bishop's in the choir. Ambrose, however, altered the position of the Emperor's seat, placing it next to the choir (Sozom. *Hist.* vii. 25).

the opinion of this Pope the ruler's power was given him by God. He was the Lord's anointed, God's earthly representative. "When we offend against rulers, we set ourselves against the ordinance of Him who set them over us." Whether the ruler be good or bad, he must be honoured and obeyed, and it is wrong even to criticize rashly, or murmur openly against the conduct even of a wicked ruler. Nowhere in the works of the early Fathers do we find so explicit an affirmation of the Divine right of the ruler and of the necessity of absolute obedience to his commands.[1] And we naturally ask how Gregory reconciled such a view with that other firm conviction of his that the Bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter, was the supreme divinely constituted authority in the Church.

As a matter of fact, in theory Gregory probably never did attempt to harmonize the two doctrines. In practice, however, his habitual course of action may be described somewhat as follows. If the Emperor interfered in ecclesiastical matters, and his decision appeared to be right, although Gregory might regret the interference, he did not remonstrate, but obeyed as a matter of course. If, for instance, the Emperor nominated a bishop, and the person so nominated was deserving of the office,

[1] *Reg. Past.* iii. 4: "Admonendi sunt subditi, ne praepositorum suorum vitam temere iudicent, si quid eos fortasse agere reprehensibiliter vident. . . . Admonendi sunt, ne cum culpas praepositorum considerant, contra eos audaciores fiant, sed sic si qua valde sunt eorum prava, apud semetipsos diiudicent, ut tamen divino timore constricti ferre sub eis iugum reverentiae non recusent." Gregory speaks of David's conduct towards Saul, whom he refused to kill, contenting himself with cutting a piece of his garment: "Quid enim per Saul nisi mali rectores; quid per David, nisi boni subditi designantur? . . . Quem David ferire metuit, quia piae subditorum mentes ab omni se peste obtrectationis abstinentes, praepositorum vitam nullo linguae gladio percutiunt, etiam cum de imperfectione reprehendunt. . . . Facta quippe praepositorum oris gladio ferienda non sunt, etiam cum recte reprehendenda iudicantur. Si quando vero contra eos vel in minimis lingua labitur, necesse est ut per afflictionem poenitentiae cor prematur; quatenus ad semetipsum redeat, et cum praepositae potestati deliquerit, eius contra se iudicium a quo sibi praelata est perhorrescat. Nam cum praepositis delinquimus, eius ordinationi qui eos nobis praetulit obviamus. Unde Moyses quoque cum contra se et Aaron conqueri populum cognovisset ait: '*Nos enim quid sumus? Nec contra nos est murmur vestrum, sed contra Dominum.*'" For similar sentiments, see also *Mor.* xxii. 56; xxv. 34 *sqq.* So Gregory of Tours says to King Chilperic: "Si quis de nobis, O Rex, iustitiae tramitem transcendere voluerit, a te corrigi potest; si vero tu excesseris, quis te corripiet? Loquimur enim tibi, sed si volueris audis; si autem nolueris, quis te condemnabit, nisi is qui se pronunciavit esse iustitiam?" (*Hist. Franc.* v. 19).

though Gregory might have wished that the election had been left to the clergy and people, he was nevertheless content to accept the Imperial nominee. When, on the other hand, he considered the Emperor's decision to be wrong, or, as he dexterously expressed it, gained by misrepresentation, he was accustomed to protest either directly or through his representative at Constantinople, or through the medium of some friend at court. In cases where he could not hope to reverse the decision, he was willing to acquiesce in it, but never to acknowledge that it was right.[1]

In illustration of this we may briefly recall some instances of Gregory's deference to Imperial authority which have been already mentioned in the foregoing pages of this book. Thus, although he was convinced that the deposition of Anastasius of Antioch was uncanonical, yet out of respect for the Emperor's authority, he did not refuse to recognize as patriarch the man who had been officially appointed to the see, although in this case the appointment was entirely contrary to ecclesiastical law.[2] Again, when Maurice desired to depose the Bishop of Prima Justiniana on account of illness, the Pope made a vigorous protest, declaring that he could never give his consent to such an uncanonical proceeding. Yet he adds, in the conclusion of his letter: "If the bishop will not ask for permission to resign, our Most Religious Sovereign has the power of doing what he likes and carrying out whatever he orders. He may make such arrangements as he thinks fit, only he must not expect us to take part in the deposition of such a man. If what he does is in accordance with the canons, we shall conform to it; if it is not, we shall submit to it, so far as we can do so without sin."[3] Again, when Maurice forbade Gregory to molest the Istrian schismatics, or make further effort to compel them to accept the Fifth General Council, the Pope obeyed at once, although he suspected that the prohibition had been obtained by bribery, and although he considered that by it the interests of the Church were being sacrificed to purely political considerations.[4] So once more, in respect of the edict of Maurice,

[1] In *Epp.* xi. 29 Gregory lays down the principle: "Quod ipse (*sc.* imperator) fecerit, si canonicum est, sequimur; si vero canonicum non est, in quantum sine peccato nostro, portamus."

[2] See above, p. 228. [3] See above, Vol. I p. 471. [4] See above, Vol. I p. 448.

forbidding soldiers to become monks, Gregory sent to the Emperor a most vehement remonstrance, which, however, concluded with the words: "In obedience to your commands, I have caused this law to be transmitted to the different countries. I have also informed my Most Serene Sovereigns by this letter that the law is certainly not in accordance with the will of God. I have thus done my duty on both sides: I have obeyed the Emperor, and yet have not kept back what I felt ought to be said on behalf of God."[1] In two cases, indeed, Gregory permitted himself to dispute the Emperor's right of interference with greater boldness. When Maurice commanded the Pope to overlook the offences of Maximus of Salona, and to recognize him as the legitimate metropolitan of Dalmatia, Gregory replied that he was perfectly willing at the Emperor's request to forgive any insult that had been put upon himself, but that he was powerless to condone any sin against God, such, *e.g.*, as the celebration of mass by one who was excommunicate. He wrote with some heat: "If the affairs of bishops committed to my charge are to be settled by patronage at the court of my Most Religious Sovereigns, woe is me! Of what use am I in the Church?" Yet in the end, although he did not entirely surrender his point, Gregory, under official pressure, compromised the matter, and allowed Maximus to be reconciled on the easiest terms possible.[2] Again, on a question concerning the jurisdiction of the bishop of Corfu, the Emperor promulgated a decree which Gregory regarded as "altogether illegal, altogether wrong, altogether unjust, thoroughly at variance with the sacred canons." Nevertheless, he refrained from publishing his own decision, "lest I should appear to be acting contrary to the commands of my Most Gracious Lord, or in contempt of him—which God forbid!" He contented himself with ordering his responsalis to endeavour to bring the Emperor round to his opinion, and to persuade him to issue a new decree in accordance with it.[3]

It will be seen from the above instances that Gregory, on the whole, acted up to his teaching, and was willing to yield obedience to the Emperor (whom he consistently regarded as in

[1] See above, pp. 182–185.

[2] See above, Vol. I pp. 462–466.

[3] See above, Vol. I pp. 474, 475.

all his actions the representative of God), even when he commanded things which were contrary to ecclesiastical law and even contrary to what the Pope himself thought right. Gregory seems to have thought that, while it was his duty to protest against anything which he disapproved, and while it was legitimate to use all the means in his power to alter the Imperial decision, yet, when these measures failed, he had no alternative but to acquiesce. How he would have acted had Maurice ventured to tamper with dogma, it is impossible to say with certainty. Probably in such a case he would have recognized that there were limits even to the duty of obedience to the Sacred Majesty. But fortunately for Gregory, his reverential loyalty was never put to so severe a test. Maurice was content to interfere only in matters of Church order and discipline, and in such concerns Gregory conceived himself bound to submit.

It is somewhat remarkable that, in conjunction with this extreme—we might almost say, servile—deference to constituted authority, Gregory retained an independence of spirit which made it possible for him to address the Emperor on occasion in a tone which verges on the insolent. The celebrated "Fool Letter" which has been already quoted, in which he replies to the Emperor's rebuke for his officiousness in the Lombard war, supplies us with an instance in point.[1] Few previous Popes would have dared to write with such freedom to the ruler of the Roman world. Yet Gregory's independence was confined to words. When it came to actions, this autocratic Pontiff was content to be the Emperor's obedient subject.

We come now to a painful and perplexing affair, which more than anything else has brought discredit on the fame of Gregory. The Pope's congratulations to Phocas on his usurpation, and his allusions to the fallen Emperor Maurice, have been the subject of infinite discussion. Before we consider the question, however, it is necessary to say a word concerning the revolution at Constantinople, which brought about Maurice's overthrow and occasioned the first bishop in Christendom to burst forth into such extravagant exclamations of delight.

The unpopularity of the Emperor had for several years been steadily increasing. His reign had been one continued

[1] See above, pp. 26–29.

disappointment to himself and his friends. For Maurice turned out to be one of those to whom Tacitus's famous dictum might truthfully be applied: "Consensu omnium capax imperii nisi imperasset." The abilities he had displayed in a subordinate command had failed to win him glory as an Emperor. His private virtues had conciliated neither the love nor even the respect of his subjects. He was a religious man, assiduous in the discharge of all religious duties, yet towards the end of his life he was suspected of a leaning towards the heresy of the Marcianists—an obscure and unpopular sect, whose tenets were a subject of contemptuous derision.[1] He worked hard, but he never succeeded in acquiring a mastery over the details of administration such as would have enabled him to correct those abuses for which he was himself held responsible by his subjects. He was anxious to lessen the burden of taxation, but his attempts at retrenchment were unwise, and he economized in the wrong direction. His parsimony was naturally regarded as avarice by the thousands who suffered from it.

Maurice, in fact, with the best intentions in the world, disgusted every one by a series of stupid blunders. Comparatively early in his reign, when the fortunate conclusion of the Persian War set free the forces which had hitherto been needed in the East, he announced his intention of leading in person a strong expedition against the Avars. Doubtless he was right in thinking that a vigorous effort, supported by all the resources of the Empire and guided by the Emperor himself, might easily have inflicted such losses on the enemy as would have crippled their powers of doing mischief for many years. But, unfortunately, Maurice lacked the resolution to carry his project through. He published his determination to lead his army to victory, and refused to listen to the objections offered by the Patriarch and the Senate, or to the entreaties of his wife and children. Yet the march had scarcely begun before his mind became distracted with superstitious fears. He spent a whole

[1] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 9: Αἵρεσις δὲ αὕτη μετὰ τινος μωρᾶς εὐλαβείας εὐήθης τε καὶ καταγέλαστος. See above, p. 207. Possibly the Marcianists are the same as the Marcionists or Marcionites. Compare Isidor. *Etymol.* viii. 5. § 21: "Marcionistae a Marcione stoico philosopho appellati, qui, Cerdonis dogma sequens, alterum bonum, alterum iustum Deum asseruit, tanquam duo principia creationis et bonitatis." John the Deacon *Vita* iv. 19 seems to identify Maurice with this sect: "Marcionista haereticus appellatur."

night in the Church of St. Sophia, praying for a sign from heaven, but no vision came. As he quitted the city there was a total eclipse. When he went out hunting, a wild boar of monstrous size ran against his horse and nearly threw him down. A violent storm, the strange death of a favourite charger, the birth of a child without eyes, eyelids, hands or arms, and with a fish's tail, completed his discomfiture. Utterly unnerved, the Emperor returned ignominiously to his palace.[1]

During the eight years which followed, the Avars harried and devastated huge tracts of Roman territory, and no adequate effort was made to repel them. Military affairs were egregiously mismanaged. For a general to be popular and successful was a certain preliminary to his recall by an Emperor who was jealous of merit, and the Roman troops were committed to the leadership of Maurice's incompetent brother Peter, or his yet more incompetent and degraded favourite, Commentiolus. And not content with promoting unworthy persons to responsible posts, the Emperor further harassed his soldiers by attempting to introduce irritating and ill-advised reforms. Here again we may acknowledge that Maurice was right in thinking that military reforms were needed. But a change which might have been effected without opposition by a popular general, was rejected when proposed by a despot who never quitted the luxurious seclusion of his palace. Mutinies broke out[2]; the Emperor vacillated and gave way; and the mutinous soldiers, instead of being punished, were pacified and rewarded.

As time passed on the state of things grew worse. Maurice's powers became enfeebled and his temper embittered by disease, while both in the army and in the capital the spirit of disaffection spread. In the year 600 the Avars, without encountering any check, marched from Sirmium to the neighbourhood of Constantinople, gathering enormous booty from the districts of Thrace, which the war had hitherto spared. The panic in Constantinople was so great that there were serious thoughts of abandoning the city and retiring to Chalcedon. Even then—such was the timidity and weakness of the Government—no resistance was offered to the invader,

[1] Theophylact *Hist.* v. 16; vi. 1 *sqq.*

[2] Mutinies were frequent during the reign of Maurice. See, for instance, Theophylact *Hist.* iii. 1-4; vi. 7, 8, 10; vii. 1; viii. 6, etc

but the people owed their deliverance simply to the fevers and dysentery that raged in the enemy's camp. Yet the retreat of the Avars had to be purchased by an increase of the annual tribute. Before he marched away, the Chagan offered to release 12,000 prisoners if the Emperor would consent to redeem them. The ransom demanded was extremely small, but Maurice —probably on the ground that many of the prisoners were deserters—refused to pay it. Whereupon the Chagan caused all whom he had taken to be massacred.[1] The sufferings caused by the invasion, the disgrace with which it was attended, the terrible tragedy at the close, contributed to raise a feeling of intense bitterness against the Emperor.

The Roman soldiers in Thrace laid the blame of their inefficiency on their cowardly general Commentiolus, and sent envoys to Constantinople to accuse him. The incapacity of the commander is evident even from the courtly narrative of Theophylact, but Maurice obstinately supported his favourite. The charges of the soldiers were dismissed, and when their chief spokesman, Phocas, attempted to remonstrate, one of the senators struck him on the face and tore his beard.[2] The dissatisfaction of the troops was reflected in the city. In the following year there was a famine, and this, together with all other evils connected with the administration, was laid to the charge of the unfortunate Emperor. A fanatical monk ran through the streets of Constantinople with a drawn sword in his hand, proclaiming to all whom he met that Maurice was doomed to perish by the sword. And on Christmas Eve, as the Emperor was walking barefoot in solemn procession, he was hooted and stoned by the mob, from whose fury he and his son escaped with difficulty.[3]

But Maurice's unpopularity passed all bounds when, in 602, he issued the unexpected order that his army should winter across the Danube, and save the Treasury the cost of their maintenance by plundering the Sclavonians.[4] Even his own brother, Peter the General, was horrified at this command,

[1] Theophanes *Chron. A. M.* 6092; Cedrenus, vol. i. p. 700. Theophylact is silent about the transaction.

[2] Theophanes *A. M.* 6092.

[3] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 4; Theophanes *A. M.* 6093.

[4] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 6, 7; Theophanes *A. M.* 6094.

which he attributed to the Emperor's avarice.[1] The soldiers were furious. They indignantly refused to remain in a country where there were no decent winter quarters, where provisions would certainly run short, and where they would be continually harassed by an enemy far better able to bear the rigours of the winter than themselves. They broke out into open insurrection, and announced their intention of deposing Maurice and of taking as their ruler either Theodosius, Maurice's eldest son and already for several years his associate in the Empire, or, in default of him, the Patrician Germanus, whose daughter Theodosius had married. Then they elected as their commander the centurion Phocas, and under his leadership marched at once on Constantinople.

In this supreme crisis of his fate Maurice displayed neither dignity, ability, nor vigour. As some excuse, indeed, it may be pleaded that his physical health was shattered and his mind was distraught with superstitious fears. The prophecies of his violent end had alarmed him, and his refusal to redeem the Avar captives weighed heavily on his conscience. Already, before the revolt, he had sent to all the patriarchs, bishops, principal monks and solitaries of his Empire presents of money, candles, and incense, together with a written request that prayers should be offered that he might be punished for his sins in this life and not in the life to come. One night he himself had a vision. He dreamt that he was standing amid a crowd of people near the statue of the Saviour, at the brazen gate of the palace, when a voice issued from the image of the great God, Jesus Christ, crying, "Bring Maurice forth!" The ministers of judgment dragged him forward, and the awful voice said, "Where wilt thou that I requite thee, here or in the world to come?" "O Lover of men," replied the Emperor, "O Lord and righteous Judge, punish me here, and not in the world to come." Then the Divine voice commanded that Maurice, with his wife Constantina, his children, and all his kin should be delivered to Phocas the soldier. When the Emperor awoke he inquired who Phocas was, and was informed that a person of that name had recently been made procurator by the army, and that he was an agitator against the Government. "What kind

[1] See his speech, Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 7. Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 16 calls Maurice "cupidissimus ac tenacissimus imperator" (cf. *ibid.* iv. 19).

of man is he?" said the Emperor. "Young and headstrong, but also a coward," was the reply. Then Maurice said, "If he is a coward, he will also be a murderer."[1]

With his mind thus diseased, it is small wonder that the Emperor's measures against the insurgents were so wretchedly ineffective. When the news of the revolt arrived, though inwardly much perturbed, Maurice affected to make light of it, presided at the games in the Hippodrome, and assured the people by the mouth of criers that there was no reason for alarm. Three days later, however, he summoned to his palace the demarchs of the Green and Blue factions, and made inquiries respecting the number of the demesmen. Fifteen hundred Greens and nine hundred Blues were then furnished with arms, and ordered to mount guard on the walls.[2] While these events were happening, Theodosius and Germanus went hunting in a spot named Callicratea, and during the hunt a letter was handed to the former, purporting to come from the rebels, and offering the diadem to him, or, in case he was unwilling to receive it, to Germanus. When Maurice heard of this affair, he believed that he was betrayed. He sent for Germanus, upbraided him for his treason, and, refusing to listen to his excuses, dismissed him with the words, "Say no more, Germanus. Nothing is pleasanter than to die by the sword." The same evening the suspected man, acting on a hint from his son-in-law, took asylum in the church which Cyrus had built in honour of the Mother of God; whence, after repulsing an attempt by the Emperor's emissary to lure him forth, he fled in the night to the great Church of St. Sophia. Thereupon Maurice flogged his son with his own hand for abetting the escape, and sent his guards to drag Germanus from his sanctuary. When these arrived at the church they found a vast crowd of

[1] Theophanes *A. M.* 6094; Zonaras, vol. iii. pp. 194, 195; Cedrenus, vol. i. pp. 703–705; Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 18. Theophanes goes on to say that the next day a message was brought to Maurice from "the holy fathers in the desert," to the effect that *ὁ Θεὸς δεξάμενος τὴν μετάνοιάν σου, σώζει τὴν ψυχήν σου, καὶ μετὰ ἁγίων κατατάττει σε πανοικεί. Τῆς δὲ βασιλείας μετὰ ἀτιμίας καὶ μετὰ κινδύνου ἐκπίπτεις.* John repeats this, and later, in chap. 19, he imputes the salvation of Maurice's soul to the prayers of Gregory: "Quia oratio Gregorii, qua illum petierat in terribili Dei iudicio liberum ab omnibus delictis inveniri vacua esse non potuit, idem Mauricius id recepit quod meruit, et in cunctis suis incommodis Deum benedicens, a sempiterno supplicio meruit liberari."

[2] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 7; Theophanes *A. M.* 6094.

people gathered round the doors. They commenced to parley, and with some difficulty at length persuaded Germanus to submit to the Emperor's order and quit the altar; but as he approached the portal to give himself up, a man in the crowd, named Andrew, suddenly cried out, "Back to the sanctuary, Germanus! save your life; your death is determined upon." Germanus returned to the altar, and the fury of the mob broke loose. The officers sent to make the arrest fled, and the people streamed through the streets, shrieking out imprecations against "the Marcianist." At the same time, the treacherous demesmen left their posts upon the walls and joined the rioters. Finding himself thus deserted by all, Maurice, in the dead of night, laid aside his Imperial robes, and in the disguise of a private citizen embarked on a swift cutter which lay in readiness, taking with him his family and vast treasure. Unfortunately, he was overtaken at sea by a violent storm, and compelled to take refuge in the Church of St. Autonomus the Martyr, on the Bithynian coast, 150 stadia from Constantinople. Here an attack of gout rendered his further flight impossible. He despatched, however, his eldest son Theodosius to implore the assistance of the King of Persia, whom he had himself formerly helped in a similar extremity.[1]

Maurice fled on the 22nd of November. Meanwhile Phocas had advanced to the Palace of the Hebdomon, whither he summoned the Patriarch, Senate, and people to meet him. The rebel leader is described as a short, ungainly man, with red hair, meeting eyebrows, shaven chin, and a scar on his cheek which turned black when he was enraged.[2] His character was a compound of all the vices. He was cruel, cowardly, addicted to wine and women, and bestial in his habits and conversation.[3] If the people wanted a ruler who should be a thorough contrast to the disgraced Maurice, they certainly found one in this man. It was still uncertain, however, who was to be Emperor.

[1] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 8, 9; Theophanes *A. M.* 6094.

[2] Cedrenus, vol. i. p. 708.

[3] No historian has anything good to say of Phocas. See particularly Cedrenus, vol. i. p. 708. Zonaras, vol. iii. p. 201 says: *ὃν δὲ ὁ Φωκᾶς γυναικομανής τε καὶ μέθυσος καὶ ὠμὸς καὶ αἱμοχαρὴς ἐμισήθη παρὰ πάντων.* Cf. Georgius Pisida *Bell. Avar* 49 *sqq.*, *Heracl.* 5 *sqq.*; Constant. Manasses *Comp. Chron.* 3614 *sqq.* Compare also Theophylact's language in his *Dialogus.*

The claims of Germanus were advocated by the Blue faction, as well as by the majority of nobles and senators; but the powerful Greens decided for Phocas. When the Patriarch, therefore, had assured himself of his orthodoxy, the lecherous, drunken ruffian was solemnly crowned in the Church of St. John the Baptist in the Hebdomon on the 23rd of November, 602. On the following day he made his state entry into the city, riding in the Imperial litter drawn by four white horses; the day after he bestowed a donative on the troops and had his wife Leontia crowned Empress.[1]

Maurice meanwhile continued under the protection of St. Autonomus, but his right of sanctuary was not likely to be long respected. In a tumult, on the occasion of Leontia's coronation, a cry had arisen among the Blues: "Begone! understand the situation; Maurice is not dead." These indiscreet words alarmed the usurper, and on the 26th of November he sent an officer to Chalcedon to destroy his rival. Maurice and his four younger sons were dragged down to the harbour of Eutropius, and murdered. The fallen Emperor met his fate with Christian fortitude. As each of the young princes was slain before his eyes, he ejaculated the words, "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true is Thy judgment"; and when the youngest, an infant, was concealed by his nurse, who nobly presented her own baby to the soldiers in its stead, the Emperor, no less "superior to the promptings of nature," revealed the pious fraud. The dead bodies were flung into the sea, and the heads were exposed in Constantinople to the insults of the mob.[2] Of the other members of Maurice's family, Theodosius was probably beheaded shortly after his father's death, though a report was subsequently circulated that he had escaped to Colchis[3]; Constantina and her three daughters were at first relegated to strict confinement in the house of Leo, but being detected

[1] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 10; Theophanes *A. M.* 6094. As regards the dates, I have followed Theophylact. The *Paschal Chronicle*, however, gives November 23 for the coronation of Phocas, November 25 for his entrance into Constantinople, and November 27 for the death of Maurice.

[2] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 11; Theophanes *A. M.* 6094; *Chron. Pasch.* p. 693, B; Zonaras, vol. iii. pp. 196, 197. For Maurice's will, see Theophylact, viii. 11.

[3] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 13, 15; Cedrenus, vol. i. p. 709; Zonaras, vol. iii. p. 197.

in conspiracies, they were all executed by the Emperor's order in 605.[1]

So fell Maurice and his house. It was not long before the unhappy Emperor's errors and weaknesses were forgotten, or at least obscured by the calamities which attended the reign of his successor.[2] Men thought regretfully of his domestic virtues, his piety, his good intentions, his munificent patronage of the arts, and when Theophylact the historian recited in public the story of his death, the entire audience was dissolved in tears.[3] Yet, on the other hand, we must not forget that the ease with which the revolution was effected affords the strongest proof of the rottenness of the fallen Government. It was the first instance since the foundation of Constantinople of an Emperor ruling in the East being dethroned by an insurrection. And there can be no doubt that for a time all classes exulted in the fall of Maurice, as in that of an odious tyrant.

Phocas was crowned on the 23rd of November, 602. It was naturally one of his first cares to send an official notification of his accession to the various provinces of the Empire. Such, however, were the difficulties of travelling in those days, that it was not until the 25th of the following April that the Imperial messengers arrived at Rome. They then appeared before the walls, carrying the effigies of the new Emperor and his wife, crowned with laurel. The Romans went out to meet them in solemn procession, with incense and lighted candles, and conducted them to a great hall in the Lateran Palace, called the Basilica Julii, where the official inauguration was to take place. Here the clergy and the Senate assembled, and when the proclamation of the new Emperor had been read, all present shouted in approval, "Hear, O Christ! Long life to Phocas the Emperor and to the Empress Leontia!" Then the Pope gave orders that the effigies should be placed in the oratory of St. Caesarius in the Palace.[4]

The envoys had also been the bearers of "favourable letters,"[5] in which the usurper and his wife had doubtless

[1] Theophanes *A. M.* 6099. For the verses inscribed on the tomb of the family, see Cedrenus, i. p. 707; Zonaras, iii. p. 198.

[2] See Zonaras, vol. iii. p. 200; and compare the account in the Life of S. Demetrius, *Acta Sanctorum* Oct. iv. p. 132.

[3] Theophylact *Hist.* viii. 12.

[4] Greg. *Epp.* xiii. 1.

[5] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 20.

announced their adherence to the Catholic Faith, and their determination to reform the many abuses which had rendered the last reign so hateful. To these letters from the murderer of his master it was now Gregory's difficult duty to reply. The answers which he at length despatched are certainly astonishing.

The first letter to Phocas runs as follows.[1]

"Glory to God in the highest![2] who, as it is written, changeth times and transferreth kingdoms, who now hath made clear unto all men what He deigned to speak by His prophet, saying: *The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.* In the incomprehensible providence of Almighty God there is alternation in the government of our mortal state. Sometimes, when the sins of many are to be punished, one man is raised up, by whose severity the necks of the people are bowed beneath the yoke of tribulation; and this we have ourselves experienced in our prolonged afflictions. Sometimes, however, when our merciful God has decreed to revive the sad hearts of the multitude with His own consolation, He raises one man to the supreme power, and by the clemency of that one He pours the grace of a Divine gladness into the hearts of all. With this gladness we trust that we shall soon be abundantly strengthened—we who rejoice that the Benignity of your Piety has attained to the summit of Imperial greatness. *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad,* and may all the people of the Empire, hitherto terribly afflicted, exult in your kindly deeds. May the proud hearts of your enemies be bowed beneath the yoke of your dominion. May the saddened and dejected spirits of your subjects be cheered by your clemency. May the power of the Divine grace make you terrible to your enemies; may your goodness make you gentle to your subjects. May the State repose in your most happy times, and may the ravages of peace that are made under the pretext of law be brought to an end. May the fraudulent contriving of testaments cease, and the violent exacting of gifts. May all men have once more the peaceful possession of

[1] *Epp.* xiii. 34.

[2] It is noteworthy that, while Gregory very properly rebukes the Eastern bishops, who in honour of a newly-consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople had sung, *This is the day which the Lord hath made* (*Epp.* vii. 7), yet he has no scruple himself in applying the sacred "Gloria in Excelsis" to the accession of the murderer Phocas.

their own property, that they may joyfully hold without fear what they have acquired without fraud. Under the yoke of your fatherly government may each regain the liberty which is his due. For between the kings of the nations and the Roman Emperors there is this difference, that the former are rulers of slaves, the latter of free men. But we can say all this better in prayer than in advising. May Almighty God preserve your heart by the power of His grace in every thought and deed; may the Holy Ghost dwell within your breast, and graciously dispose you to every act of justice and mercy, so that your Grace, after reigning for many years on earth, may at the last attain unto the kingdom that is in heaven."

Such was the first letter to Phocas, written in May, almost immediately after the news of the revolution was brought to Rome. Two months later the Pope indited a second letter to the Emperor and one to his wife Leontia. The second letter to Phocas resembles the first in style and expression. The Pope records his thankfulness to God for removing "the yoke of sadness" and restoring "the days of liberty" by means of the benign rule of the Religious Emperor, which he devoutly prays may be happily prolonged. He says that he is now again sending an apocrisiarius to represent him at Constantinople. During the last years of Maurice the situation of that official at court had been rendered so unpleasant, that all the Roman ecclesiastics were afraid to undertake the duties, and therefore at the time of Phocas's accession no Papal nuncio was in residence in the Imperial city. Now, however, all was changed: every one was eager to hasten to the feet of so amiable a ruler, and of those who were eligible the Pope had selected the deacon Boniface, to whose representations on Italian affairs he begs the Emperor to incline his religious ears.[1]

The letter to Leontia is sufficiently important to be quoted in full.[2]

"What tongue can speak, what mind imagine, the thanks we owe to Almighty God for the serenity of your rule, that the burdens have been removed which for long have been so heavy on our necks, and that we have once more that light yoke of the Imperial rule, which its subjects delight to bear? Therefore in heaven let glory be given to the Creator by the tuneful

[1] *Epp.* xiii. 41. [2] *Ibid.* xiii. 42.

choirs of angels, and on earth let thanksgiving be rendered to Him by men, because the whole State, smitten by so many wounds of sorrow, has felt at length the soothing balm of your consolation. Hence we are bound zealously to implore the mercy of Almighty God, that He may always hold your heart with His right hand, and guide your thoughts with His celestial grace, so that your Serenity may rule your subjects the more uprightly in proportion as you know how to render better service to Him who is Lord of all. As His mercy has made you our Sovereigns, so may He also make you His champions in the love of the Catholic Faith. May He infuse into your hearts both zeal and gentleness, that with religious fervour you may never leave unpunished an offence against God; yet when an offence is committed against yourselves, you may be patient and forgiving. In the person of your Piety He gives to us once more the Clemency of Pulcheria Augusta, who on account of her zeal for the Catholic Faith was called in the holy synod 'the new Helena.'[1] May the mercy of Almighty God prolong your days, and the days of your Most Religious Consort, so that the more your life is lengthened the more securely may the well-being of your subjects be established.

"I ought, perhaps, to beg your Serenity to consider that the Church of St. Peter—which up to the present time has been suffering greatly from the machinations of evil men—is especially commended to your care. But as I know that you love Almighty God, I must not ask you for that which your Piety bestows of your own accord and from your own kind feeling. For the more you fear the Maker of all things, the more must you love the Church of him to whom it was said: *Thou art Peter*, etc. Wherefore we doubt not the strength of the love with which you bind yourselves to him, by whom you earnestly desire to be loosed from all your sins. May he, then, be the guardian of your rule, may he be your protector on earth and intercede for you in heaven, that, as in your reign you take off the heavy burdens and cause your subjects to rejoice, you may yourselves, after many years, rejoice in the celestial kingdom."

No one who has learnt to admire the character of the hero of this biography can read these letters without deep regret.

[1] Conc. Chalcedon. act. vi. (Labbe, iv. p. 608).

That Gregory, occupying as he did the highest place in Christendom, should have permitted himself to write in such terms to an abominable murderer, whose vile disposition was unrelieved by a single redeeming virtue or even by a generous vice, and at the same time to exult so heartlessly over the fall of a prince who, despite all his faults, was at least undeniably pious and honestly desirous of doing what was right, affects us with surprise and even horror. Had Gregory, then, entirely forgotten his obligation to the Emperor who had raised him to the Papacy, and for whose prolonged life he had but a short while ago earnestly recommended his friends to pray?[1] Had he forgotten the affection which, if his letters prove anything, he had once really felt for the unhappy Empress Constantina? the tie of spiritual kinship which united him with the promising young prince Theodosius? the interest he had once shown in the welfare and education of the royal children?[2] And did he really believe that the revolution which placed the despicable Phocas on the throne was a proper subject for the unbounded rejoicing of men and angels?

At first sight, it must be confessed, Gregory's conduct appears black indeed. Yet a closer examination of the letters and of the circumstances attending their composition will suggest some considerations which may induce us somewhat to mitigate our judgment.

In the first place, it is extremely unlikely that Gregory was acquainted either with the details of the insurrection or with the real character of Phocas. News, as we have already seen, travelled extremely slowly, particularly in the winter-time, and it is fairly certain that as late at least as the February of 603 Gregory believed that Maurice was still reigning.[3] Moreover, there was no Roman apocrisiarius at this time in Constantinople to send the Pope accurate information,[4] while his friends in the city, if they ventured to write, would naturally be particularly guarded in what they said, for fear lest their letters should fall into the hands of the suspicious tyrant. Hence it is not improbable that when the Imperial envoys reached Rome in April, Gregory had either no knowledge at all of the revolution and of

[1] *Epp.* ix. 135; xi. 28. [2] *Ibid.* vii. 23.
[3] *Ibid.* xiii. 26, where Gregory says not a word about the revolution.
[4] *Ibid.* xiii. 41.

the disposition of the new Emperor, or at least that his information on both points was imperfect and one-sided. It would, of course, be the endeavour of the envoys to represent Phocas in as favourable a light as possible; and the impression thus produced upon the Pope would be strengthened by the conciliatory letters of the Emperor himself.

Again, a careful perusal of Gregory's letters discloses the fact that the Pope does not directly praise or flatter the Emperor and his wife. Leaving on one side those stereotyped expressions of compliment which Gregory, in accordance with the usage of his time, was accustomed to employ whenever he addressed himself to persons of rank, we observe that he refrains from positive statements, and confines himself to wishes. The letters, in fact, are a continuous aspiration after benefits which might result from the new *régime*. Doubtless, as John the Deacon suggests, the Pope thought that the best way of influencing the new rulers was to give them credit for the virtues which he desired them to possess, and to insinuate a statement of the duties which they ought to discharge under the disguise of a flattering hope.[1]

Once more, it may be urged that Gregory's attitude towards the Emperor is, in great measure, implied in his theory of the civil power noticed above. The Empire was purely elective, and Phocas had been elected with the due formalities and crowned. The means by which he had reached his position did not affect the fact that he was now the Most Religious Emperor, God's representative, whom it was a sin to disobey or even criticize. The personality of the Emperor does not come into the question. For Gregory taught that the elected sovereign, however bad he might be, was still the Lord's anointed, and as such had a claim upon the reverence of his subjects. Hence the Pope's congratulations may be taken to apply, not to Phocas personally, but to Phocas in his capacity of God-appointed ruler of the Holy Empire. The difficulty

[1] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 28: "His Gregorius laudibus aut ideo novos principes demulcebat, ut audientes quales esse debebant, fierent mitiores quam Mauricius fuerat, cuius tot criminibus involuta tempora cognoscebant; aut quia eos sibi suaeque ecclesiae devotissimos cernens, non eos ad tyrannidem ruituros esse putabat. Qui sicut quorumlibet vitia liberis vocibus arguebat, et contra canones priscasve consuetudines venire neminem permittebat, ita quae consuetudinis fuerant nulli penitus denegabat."

lies more in Gregory's theory of the civil power than in his attitude at this moment.

Lastly, it should be noted that Gregory's allusions to Maurice refer, not to the Emperor himself, but rather to the sufferings endured by the people under his Government. Certainly in the West these sufferings had been acute. The provincials had been reduced to desperation by the cruel exactions of the Imperial officials. The delinquencies of these officials had been winked at, the laws had not been fairly administered, every species of violence and fraud had been perpetrated with the connivance of the Imperial Government. In Italy the ravages of the Lombards had been almost unchecked, and Maurice had persisted in the irritating policy of refusing either to make a lasting peace or to carry on the war with vigour. Moreover, the conduct of the late Emperor towards Gregory himself had been singularly vexatious. He had rewarded the Pope's patriotic efforts for peace by grievously insulting him; he had continually interfered in ecclesiastical affairs to the detriment of the Pope's authority; he had published an edict which the Pope believed sincerely to be impious; he had abetted the slight offered to the Pope by the Patriarch of Constantinople. That Gregory should have been discontented with his rule, that he should have hoped for some benefit to Italy and the Church from the change of Government, that he should have discerned a prospect of better days in the promises contained in Phocas's "favourable letters," was surely not unnatural.

Nevertheless, while making every reasonable allowance for Gregory's behaviour, an unbiassed historian finds it impossible to excuse it entirely. Doubtless the Pope was unaware of all the details of the revolution, yet he can scarcely have been ignorant of the murder of the innocent Maurice and of his yet more innocent children. Doubtless he did not know the utter infamy of Phocas, yet he knew him, at least, to be a traitor and a regicide. We admit that he avoids direct flattery of the new Emperor and his wife, yet the general tone of his letters is far warmer than a merely official congratulation to the elected sovereigns of the Roman world would warrant. We admit, again, that his irritation against Maurice was not unjustifiable, yet we cannot but feel that his allusions to the fallen

prince are wanting in generosity.[1] His professed exultation in the new order of things seems hardly to ring true, and it is a noteworthy fact that in the other letters written at this time no reference whatever is made to what he here pretends to regard as the most joyful of events. Indeed, the very messenger who carried the letter to Leontia was the bearer of another to the Patriarch of Alexandria, which breathes a very different strain. "I beg of you to pray more earnestly than ever for me, a sinner. For I am terribly afflicted by bodily pains and bitterness of heart and the fearful greatness of the mortality, amid the countless swords of the Lombards. Among all these evils I seek no temporal consolation but that which is eternal; and this I cannot obtain by myself, but I trust I shall obtain it through the intercession of your Blessedness."[2] We may give Gregory credit for believing that the policy he adopted was the one best calculated to conciliate the Emperor, and to interest him in the fortunes of Italy and Rome. This probably is true. Yet, however well adapted for promoting a political purpose, the letters are unworthy of a minister of God. They will always remain a blot on Gregory's fame, and a regrettable stain on the fair record of his pontificate.

Less than a year after writing his memorable letters to Phocas, the great Pope passed away. At the close of his

[1] As Dr. Hodgkin points out, Gregory could not rise to the level of David and utter a lament over the fall of his persecutor. Contrast with his conduct on this occasion his own excellent precepts to Clementina on the duty of forgiving injuries (*Epp.* ix. 85): "I have been told," he writes, "that when any one offends you, you cherish the feeling of vexation and will not forgive. If this is true, my sorrow is equal to my affection for you, and I beg you to expel nobly this vice from your soul, and not suffer the tares of the enemy to grow up beside the crop of good works. Recall the words of the Lord's Prayer, and let not the feeling of offence be stronger with you than the duty of forgiveness. Conquer ill deeds by kindness, by salutary forbearance win the offender whom a persistent severity may alienate. Forgive him, that he may feel ashamed, retain no feeling that may cause him pain. Mercy in correction discreetly exercised is often more effective than severity in inflicting punishment: the one sometimes makes a man more faithful and obedient, the other makes him obstinate and ill-disposed. We do not mean by this that you should feel less zeal for righteousness, but that you should show the same feeling in little things that you ought to show in great. Whenever the nature of an offence requires the exercise of severity, we should inflict such a punishment as will correct the fault, and when it is corrected we should not refuse our favour to the offender."

[2] *Epp.* xiii. 45.

life he was afflicted with a settled melancholy, which, aggravated by intense physical sufferings, made existence itself a burden almost too heavy to be borne. His naturally serious disposition, forced into premature development amid unhealthy surroundings, accustomed early to scenes of misery and horror, and without experience of the brighter sides of life, deepened at the last into an habitual gloom. His religion, dominated by the tremendous and vivid idea of the judgment, gave him little comfort. His continual bodily pains[1] increased his morbid tendencies. The last years of his life were years of great unhappiness. A black misery weighed continually upon him, from which he vainly sought to escape by arduous labour. His "one consolation was the hope that death would come speedily."[2] Yet, even at the last, amid his terrible suffering and depression, the Pope never ceased to take kindly thought for others. He could still sympathize with Eulogius over his trouble about his eyesight,[3] recommend Marinianus to take better care of his health,[4] and order a warm cloak to be sent to a bishop who was suffering from the cold.[5] But for himself, he desired of all things to depart.

His release came on the 12th of March, 604, and on the same day he was buried in the portico of the Basilica of St. Peter, in front of the sacristy.[6] Two centuries after his death, his namesake, Gregory the Fourth, removed his body within the church to an oratory near the new sacristy, and covered the tomb with panels of silver and the back wall with golden mosaics.[7] Subsequent translations took place in the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the remains now rest beneath the altar in the Chapel of Clement the Eighth.[8] Gregory's epitaph, composed by Peter Oldradus, archbishop of

[1] *Epp.* xi. 20, 26.
[2] *Ibid.* xiii. 26.
[3] *Ibid.* xiii. 45.
[4] *Ibid.* xiii. 30.
[5] *Ibid.* xiv. 15.
[6] *Lib. Pont. Vita Greg. I*; *S. Gallen Life* c. 32; Paul. Diac. *Vita* 29; Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 68. Baeda *H. E.* ii. 1 wrongly gives the date 605 (cf. i. 23, where 591 is wrongly given for 590). The rule was to bury on the day of death; hence the festival of a saint is often called his "depositio." The length of Gregory's pontificate was 13 years 6 months and 10 days (September 3, 590—March 12, 604). The author of the *S. Gallen Life* says: "De fine vero huius vitae viri, quomodo qualis esset, minime audivimus."
[7] *Lib. Pont. Vita Gregorii IV*; Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 80.
[8] See further below, p. 273.

Milan, and secretary to Adrian the First, is cited by Bede. It consists of sixteen hexameters, and contains one famous phrase—the designation of Gregory as "Consul of God."[1] Two small fragments of this epitaph have been discovered in recent times.

The grief of the people at the time of Gregory's death was intense, but there is a certain amount of evidence that a reaction of feeling against his memory took place shortly afterwards. Both Paul and John agree that an attempt to discredit him was made by certain ill-disposed persons. The stories of the biographers, however, are somewhat discrepant in the details.

The former relates that after Gregory's death, when certain persons, under the influence of envy, assailed his reputation, Peter the Deacon, the friend and secretary of the Pope, declared that he had seen the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove hovering over his head and touching his lips. "When that vessel of election and dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost was interpreting the last vision of the Prophet Ezechiel, a veil was drawn between himself and his secretary. As Gregory kept silence for long intervals, his servant made a hole in the veil with his pen, and looking through it, he beheld a dove, whiter than snow, sitting upon Gregory's head, and holding its beak for a long time to his lips. When the dove drew away from his lips, the holy Pontiff began to speak, and his secretary transcribed his words. But when the organ of the Holy Ghost was silent, his servant again applied his eye to the hole, and beheld him, with hands and eyes upraised to heaven as if in prayer, receiving as before the dove's beak between his lips."[2] Paul further says that after Gregory's death there was a dreadful famine. Sabinian, who had succeeded him as Pope, withdrew the free doles which Gregory had been wont to distribute through the monasteries, guest-houses, deaconries, and hospitals. The poor, who were thus rendered completely destitute, raised a clamour: "Apostolic Lord, let not your Holiness suffer us to perish, since our father, your predecessor, the holy Gregory, has hitherto taken

[1] Baeda *H. E.* ii. 1; Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 68. The last couplet runs—

"Hisque Dei consul factus laetare triumphis
Nam mercedem operum iam sine fine tenes."

[2] Paul. Diac. *Vita* 28. This chapter, however, occurs among the interpolations in Paul's biography.

care to feed us." But Sabinian, in anger, replied, "If Gregory for the glory of his own praise took care to entertain all the people, we are not able to feed them all." This answer he continually made to the outcries of the citizens. Then three times the spirit of Gregory appeared to him in a vision, and with mild reproof exhorted him to act more generously. But since the Pope persisted in paying no attention to the warning, Gregory appeared once more, violently rebuked and threatened him, and finally struck him a blow on the head, from the effects of which he shortly afterwards died.[1]

The second biographer, John the Deacon, makes no direct allusion to Sabinian. According to his account,[2] the famine occurred in the very year of Gregory's death, when a hostile party, taking advantage of the general distress, spread abroad reports that Gregory had wasted the property of the see. The fury of the people was roused, and, since Gregory himself was out of reach, they determined to burn his books. Then Peter the Deacon endeavoured to dissuade them from the sacrilege, affirming that he had "very frequently" seen the Holy Ghost, in the shape of a dove, hovering over the Doctor's head and inspiring his compositions. This statement he further confirmed with the most solemn form of oath. Taking the Gospels in his hand, he ascended the ambo, and prayed God to take his life if what he said was true. He then repeated his declaration, and, "amid the words of his true confession, breathed forth his spirit."[3]

The details of these stories, which have been repeated with more or less fidelity by later writers, are not sufficiently well attested to be accepted as sober history. They seem, however,

[1] Paul. Diac. *Vita* 29. The story seems to be derived from the *S. Gallen Life* c. 28. The famine must probably be placed in the year 605, and followed a great frost in the winter of 604. See Paul. Diac. *H. L.* iv. 9; *Lib. Pont. Vita Sabiniani.*

[2] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 69.

[3] For a parallel case, see Greg. Tur. *De Glor. Confess.* 59: "Subdiaconus vero plenus dierum, aegre ferens quod virtus sancti Trojani occuleretur, convocato episcopo cum clericis ac civibus senioribus, omnia quae a sancto audierat, et qualiter mysterium luminis viderat, quod manifestissime fidem Trojani Martinique gloriam patefecit, ex ordine reseravit; nec quidquam ex his occuluit, adiiciens haec: Et ut probetis vere esse quae loquor, finito sermone finem facio vitae. Et his dictis, clausis oculis, obiit, non sine admiratione astantium."

to contain this kernel of truth—that Gregory's profuse liberality had drained the treasury of his Church, and caused his successor considerable embarrassment, and, further, that in consequence of the retrenchments that were subsequently made, the memory of the great Pope was somehow brought into odium. This unpopularity, however, was only temporary. The Romans were not so ungrateful as to withhold their love and reverence from the man who had done so much for them. Year by year, John tells us, they kept his feast, and on the vigil visited his tomb in crowds, and kissed, with affectionate devotion, his pallium, girdle, and silver phylacteria, which were still preserved.[1]

Of the miraculous stories which soon became associated with Gregory's name, it is unnecessary to speak at length.[2] Three only are sufficiently celebrated to deserve notice. Of these, the first, which relates how the intercession of the Pope rescued from torment the soul of the good Emperor Trajan, has been already alluded to in an early chapter of this work.[3] The second—the story of the brandeum—was related by Gregory of Pope Leo, and was afterwards transferred by his biographer to

[1] Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 80. The pallium was woven of white linen with no marks of the needle in it. The relic-case was of thin silver, and hung from the neck by crimson cloth. The belt was narrow, only a thumb's breadth wide. For the veneration paid to Gregory in both East and West, consult *Acta Sanctorum* 12 March ii. p. 121 *sqq.* Curiously enough, he came to be regarded, in Belgium at any rate, as the patron saint of schoolboys, "patronus addiscentium litteras." See *Acta Sanctorum* January ii. p. 363, § 6: "Erat tunc festum Gregorii Papae, quem frater speciali affectu diligebat; quia in eius festo scholas ad discendum alphabetum cum aliis pueris primitus intravit."

[2] The author of the *S. Gallen Life* mentions the following: (1) miracle of the mass of Gregory (c. 20); (2) miracle of the brandeum (c. 21); (3) miracle of the binding of the magi (c. 22); (4) miracle of the cure of the Lombard king (c. 23); (5) miracle of the death of Sabinian (c. 28); (6) miracle of the salvation of Trajan (c. 29). Five of these are found in the interpolated section of the Life by Paul. Diac. cc. 22–28; and the other, concerning Sabinian, in c. 29. Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 41–44 refers to the four miracles of the mass, of the brandeum, of the magi, and of the salvation of Trajan, as tales current in the English Church. He adds several stories of visions, in which Gregory after his death is said to have appeared to monks and other persons connected with St. Andrew's Monastery (iv. c. 86 *sqq.*) and one story of an appearance witnessed by himself (iv. 100).

[3] See above, Vol. I. p. 48 and *note*. To the references there given I must add Arturo Graf *Roma nella memoria e nelle immaginazione del medio evo* c. 12; and Gaston Paris *La Légende de Trajan* (35 fasc. *Bibliothèque de l'école des hautes études*).

Gregory himself.[1] The third, the legend of the mass of Gregory, runs as follows[2]: A certain noble Roman lady was accustomed every Sunday to present bread of her own making for consecration in the mass. One day, when Gregory was about to communicate her with the Host, repeating the customary formula,[3] the woman smiled, thinking it impossible that the bread, which she recognized as hers, could really be the Body of the Lord. Gregory thereupon replaced the Host upon the altar, and prayed, together with all the people, that a miracle might be vouchsafed to restore the woman's faith. When the prayer was done, and the veil which covered the bread was removed, there was revealed upon the altar a fragment of Flesh stained with blood.[4] Again the Pope prayed, and the Flesh once more assumed the appearance of bread, with which the woman, all doubt having been removed, was straightway communicated.[5]

In art Gregory is usually represented in the pontifical robes with the tiara and staff with the double cross. His peculiar symbol is the dove—an allusion, of course, to the story of Peter the Deacon.[6] Sometimes, however, he is indicated by a book or an angel playing a musical instrument. The legendary scenes of his life which painters have chosen most commonly as the subject of their art are the supper at which appeared the Thirteenth Guest, the miracle of the mass, and the miracle

[1] See above, Vol. I. p. 281, *note* 1.

[2] *S. Gallen Life* 20 (where the story is given as a mere tradition: "antiquorum fertur esse narratio"); Paul Diac. *Vita* 23; Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 41. Greg. Tur. gives two instances of "verus sanguis" flowing "de effracto pane" (*H. F.* v. 34; vi. 21).

[3] *S. Gallen Life* and John: "Corpus Domini nostri Iesu Christi conservet animam tuam." Paul: "Corpus Domini nostri Iesu Christi prosit tibi in remissionem omnium peccatorum et vitam aeternam." "Before the end of the fourth century, in Italy and Africa, the celebrant said, in giving communion, merely, 'Corpus Christi' and 'Sanguis Christi,' to which the communicant answered, 'Amen.' Cf. pseudo-Ambrose IV *de Sacram.* 5; S. Aug. *Serm.* 272, and *contra Faust.* 12. In Alexandria the corresponding phrase was *σῶμα ἁγίον*" (Gasquet's note).

[4] *S. Gallen Life*: "Invenit super altare quod posuit ut digituli auricularis particulam sanguilenti."

[5] Gregory said to the woman: "Nunc carnalibus considera oculis, quod prius obcaecata celestibus minime potuisti conspicere, et disce ei esse credula qui dixit: *Nisi manducaveritis carnem filii hominis et biberitis eius sanguinem non habebitis vitam in vobis*" (*S. Gallen Life*),

[6] Paul. Diac. *Vita* 28; Joh. Diac. *Vita* iv. 69. On the symbol, see A. Maury *Croyances et légendes du Moyen Age* pp. 264–273.

of the brandeum. The first of these incidents is depicted in two famous works of art—in Veronese's fresco in S. Maria del Monte at Vicenza, and in Vasari's masterpiece in the Bologna Gallery. In both pictures the Unknown Guest has the lineaments of the Saviour. A well-known representation of the miracle of the brandeum, by Andrea Sacchi, hangs in the Vatican Gallery, and a copy of it in mosaic is placed over the altar of St. Gregory in St. Peter's. In the Church of S. Gregorio there is a fine relief, apparently of the fifteenth century, representing the Pope in prayer for the release of souls in purgatory, and a ciborium of the same date depicting the penitential procession filing past the Castello S. Angelo. In the same church will be found an artistic statue of the saint by Cordieri.

Concerning the relics of Gregory there is much uncertainty. It seems probable, however, that his body still rests in Rome. As I have already pointed out, it was buried originally in the portico of St. Peter's, from which it was removed by Pope Gregory the Fourth (827–844) to an oratory inside the church.[1] Here it remained till the fifteenth century, when Pope Pius the Second, having built a chapel to St. Andrew, transferred Gregory's coffin to the new altar. "The coffin," says Lanciani,[2] is "described as a 'conca aegyptiaca,' an ancient bathing-basin, of porphyry, which was protected by an iron grating." Yet another translation took place in the time of Paul the Fifth. "On December 28, 1605," writes Lanciani,[3] "the porphyry urn was opened, and the body of the great man transferred to a cypress case; on the eighth day of the following January a procession, headed by the college of cardinals and the aristocracy, accompanied the remains to their fourth and last resting-place, the Capella Clementina, built by Clement the Eighth, near the entrance to the modern sacristy. There are now two inscriptions: one on the marble lid, 'Here lies Saint Gregory the Great, first of his name, Doctor of the Church'; the other on the cypress case, 'Evangelista Pallotta, cardinal of S. Lorenzo in Lucina, dean of this church, collected in this case the remains of Gregory the Great, and removed them from the altar of St. Andrew to this new chapel. Done by order of

[1] See above, p. 268.
[2] Lanciani *Pagan and Christian Rome* p. 223.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 224.

Paul the Fifth, in the first year of his pontificate, on Sunday, January 8, A.D. 1606.'"

According to the Roman account, then, the body of Gregory continued in St. Peter's. On the other hand, there is a certain amount of evidence that, during the pontificate of Eugenius the Second, in the year 826, the body was brought to France and placed in the Monastery of St. Medard at Soissons. Odilo the monk informs us that in this year Rodoinus, prior of St. Medard, went to Rome to beg the body of St. Sebastian, and that when he was there he bribed the sacristans of St. Peter's, and in the night opened the tomb of Gregory and removed the remains, which he afterwards carried back with him to Soissons, together with the body of St. Sebastian.[1] This story, of course, is at variance with the statement of the Papal Biographer and John the Deacon, that the body was removed to a new tomb in Rome by Gregory the Fourth, who did not become Pope until 827; and on this matter the Papal Biographer and John are undoubtedly better authorities than Odilo. Nevertheless, very many writers in the following centuries speak of the body of Gregory as being at Soissons,[2] and St. Thomas of Canterbury made a pilgrimage to that city to invoke the help of "the apostle of the Church of England, who lyeth in the same towne intombed." There is a story, moreover, that when in 1564 the Huguenots sacked the churches and monasteries of Soissons and burned many of the relics, the remains of Gregory, wrapped in a cloth, were flung into the moat; but instead of sinking they floated on the surface and were subsequently recovered.[3] Perhaps the simplest way of accounting for the tradition of the translation of the body to Soissons is to suppose that, not indeed the whole body, but some portion of it, was actually brought into France, and that this was commonly spoken of as "the body of St. Gregory."[4] This, at any rate, seems to be the only satisfactory method of harmonizing the Roman and the French traditions.

[1] Odilo *De Translatione Reliquiarum SS. Sebastiani Martyris et Gregorii Papae* c. 15. Cf. *Ep. ad Ingrannum* c. 1 (Migne *P. L.* cxxxii.).

[2] *Acta Sanctorum* 12 March; Mabillon ap. Migne *P. L.* cxxxii. p. 577.

[3] *Acta Sanctorum* January ii. pp. 295, 296, *De iisdem Reliquiis S. Sebastiani itemque SS. Gregorii et Medardi a Calvinistarum furore servatis*: also *ibid.* 12 March.

[4] Baronius, ad ann. 827, c. 34.

If there is controversy concerning the last resting-place of the body of Gregory, there is even more disputing about his head. Several towns lay claim to the possession of this relic; but the skull at Sens is perhaps the most famous. The legend is that Ansegisus, archbishop of Sens, went to Rome about the year 876, and was presented by Pope John the Eighth with "the head of St. Gregory the Doctor, enclosed in lead, together with an arm of St. Leo the Doctor." These relics the archbishop carried home with him and deposited in the Monastery of St. Pierre-le-Vif.[1] In the present day "the upper part of the skull (less one of the temple bones, which was given to our holy father Leo the Thirteenth) and another bone are preserved in the treasury of the cathedral of Sens." [2] From this famous head, moreover, a flat, oblong piece of bone was given, at his own request, to Pope Urban the Eighth in 1628, who presented it to the Roman oratory S. Maria in Vallicella, where it is still preserved.[3] Once more, when the chapel dedicated to St. Gregory in the cathedral of Avignon was built by Monsignor Dupont, a relic of the saint was sent him by Pope Gregory the Sixteenth, and it was taken from the bone in S. Maria in Vallicella.

According to another account, a head of Gregory was given by Pope John the Fifteenth to Gebhard, bishop of Constance, who deposited it in St. Peter's Monastery in that city[4]; whence it was afterwards taken to Prague by the Emperor Charles the Fourth.[5] Another so-called head is mentioned as having belonged to a monastery in the neighbourhood of Lisbon; while a relic of the head of Gregory is claimed by the Church of SS. John and Cordula at Cologne.[6]

A word may be added concerning the lesser relics of Gregory. In the great sack of Rome in 1527, there was stolen, among other relics, a crystal vase containing an arm of the saint. What became of this relic I have been unable to discover; but in the present day I believe there are in existence

[1] *Acta Sanctorum* 12 March.

[2] H. K. Mann *Lives of the Popes* vol. i. p. 222.

[3] *Acta Sanctorum* 12 March.

[4] *Acta Sanctorum* August vi. p. 110 *sqq. An caput S. Gregorii Magni ad Petershusienses a S. Gebehardo delatum.*

[5] *Ibid.* January i. p. 1084; and 12 March p. 130.

[6] *Ibid.* 12 March.

two so-called arms of Gregory—one in St. Gregory's Monastery at Rome and the other at Cambray. A hand of the saint is preserved in the cathedral of Cesena, and a finger-bone in the Church of St. Pantaleon in Cologne. The Carthusians of Cologne possess a tooth, a large bone and a small bone; the Carthusians of Belgium have a large bone; the Jesuits in Lisbon have more Gregorian relics. In Spain there was formerly a picture of the Virgin Mary which was said to have been sent by Gregory to Leander of Seville,[1] but whether this work of art is still in existence I do not know. In St. Stephen's Church at Bologna there is treasured a portion of the great Pope's dalmatic. Finally, in the Church of St. Gregory, Rome, they have, besides the arm, an ivory crosier given by Gregory the Sixteenth, which is said to have belonged to the saint. Here, also, are exhibited the marble chair of Gregory, a marble table with antique supports at which he is said to have entertained his poor guests, and the recess in which he used to sleep.[2]

And now, in conclusion, I will endeavour to sum up, in as few words as may be, the work and character of Pope Gregory. First as to his work. There can be no doubt that Gregory's great achievement was the foundation of the mediaeval Papacy. He placed the Roman See in a position of predominance, and won for it a recognition universal (save in Ireland and Wales) throughout the West, general even in the East. To specify a little more exactly, it is clear that Gregory strengthened the Papacy in two ways. In the first place, he contributed much to convert the old Roman primacy of honour into an autocratic supremacy. He lost no opportunity of bringing home to men's minds the fact that the See of Peter was the one supreme, decisive authority in the Catholic Church. During his pontificate close relations were established between Rome and the Churches all over the world. In Spain, in

[1] *Acta Sanctorum* January i. p. 974, and 11 March p. 53.

[2] For the relics of Gregory generally, consult *Acta Sanctorum* 12 March; C. Wolfsgruber *Gregor der Grosse* p. 588 *sqq*. A short and flippant notice will be found in J. A. S. Collin de Plancy *Dictionaire critique des reliques et des images* vol. i. pp. 375, 376. For some additional information I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Grissell.

Gaul, in Africa, in Illyricum, the sphere of Papal influence was extended; in Saxon Britain the authority of the Pope was for the first time felt; among the Arian Lombards it won, if not always obedience, at least deference and respect; even in the East it obtained a recognition hitherto unprecedented, and the influential Patriarch of Alexandria himself was willing to submit to the Pope's "commands." A regular system of appeals to Rome was introduced, the Pope claimed and exercised the right of vetoing the decrees of synods, of annulling the decisions of patriarchs, and of inflicting punishment on ecclesiastics even of the highest rank. In short, the Divine right of the successor of St. Peter to govern the Universal Church was steadily upheld as a principle which the Catholic world was bound in duty to acknowledge. Secondly, while emphasizing the spiritual supremacy of Rome, Gregory at the same time organized and built up the Papacy as a temporal power. He himself occupied a semi-monarchical position; his power in Italy was far more real than that of either Exarch or Emperor. Taking advantage of the opportunity which circumstances offered, he boldly possessed himself of the place of authority which the Emperors had left vacant and the Lombard kings had not had time to occupy, and established a political influence in the peninsula which endured for centuries. Henceforth it was not the Emperor or that Exarch, but the Pope that called forth all the loyalty and devotion of the Italian populations. Rome, with its august traditions of government and civilization, was saved from extinction, and as the Papal city continued to be the capital of the Christian world.

As the Father of the mediaeval Papacy, then—that system half-spiritual, half-political, which, with all its faults, was yet perhaps the one best adapted for preserving religion and civilization through the succeeding centuries[1]—Gregory principally engages the attention of historians. But in other spheres his work was productive of lasting results. Leaving out of consideration his influence on the shaping of Western dogma, which has yet to be discussed in the Third Part of this work, I may

[1] Milman *History of Latin Christianity* bk. iii. c. 7, writes: "It is impossible to conceive what had been the confusion, the lawlessness, the chaotic state of the Middle Ages without the mediaeval Papacy; and of the mediaeval Papacy the real father is Gregory the Great."

refer to his fruitful labours in organizing missionary enterprises; in developing the system of monasticism, and freeing it from the oppressions of the bishops; in organizing the clergy and fixing their relations to the Papacy, to the monks, and to the secular authorities; in setting the tone of Christian thought in respect of literature, legend, miracle, and the like; in imposing on the Catholic Church the form which it preserved almost without change through the centuries which followed. I have spoken at length in previous chapters on various aspects of this important work, and there is no need to recapitulate. I will only say that the mediaeval Church as well as the mediaeval Papacy is, to no slight extent, the creation of Pope Gregory. For the ecclesiastical situation of the Middle Ages he, more than any other single man, must be held responsible. And on our estimate of that situation our judgment of the work of Gregory must in the last resort depend.

If such, then, was Gregory's work, what shall be said of his character? That he had splendid practical qualities no one would deny. His wonderful energy, his fine business capacity, his far-seeing statesmanship, his thorough grasp of details the most intricate,—all these have been justly commended by writers of every school of thought. Gregory without doubt was the strong man of his age, thoroughly convinced of the righteouness of his cause, and prepared to make any sacrifice to give practical force to his convictions. He was not certainly a profound thinker. In the realm of speculation he was never quite at home, and his thoughts rarely penetrated deep below the surface of things. But in the sphere of action he was as a giant among pigmies, and his heroic figure cast its shadow far into the future. The Church, the country, and the civilization which he influenced, yield proof sufficient of his greatness.

While, however, it is acknowledged that Gregory was a great Roman, a recent historian hesitates to admit his claim to be a great saint.[1] And certainly we cannot deny that, together with qualities which arouse our reverential admiration, Gregory at times exhibits others which are scarcely appropriate to the saintly character. What shall we say, for instance, of that excessive subservience to the great ones of the world, which induced him to pass over vice and even crime in personages of elevated

[1] Hodgkin *Italy and her Invaders* vol. v. p. 452.

rank? How can we excuse his unfortunate letters to Brunichildis, or Venantius, or Phocas? How can we palliate the bursts of ill temper, vented in stinging sarcasms,[1] or the cruel harshness which could deny burial to an old friend on account of a trifling fault? Whatever pleas can be made in excuse of such failings have been made already in the foregoing pages. But still the failings remain as blots on an otherwise noble character, showing, if indeed proof were needed, that the ideal of saintliness ever eludes even those who most fervently aspire to realize it.

And yet, though we freely acknowledge the imperfections of Gregory's character, we can scarcely help regarding him as a pre-eminently saintly man. His whole life was dominated by the religious motive. His sole desire was to promote the glory of God and of His Church. If ever there was a man who strove at all times to act up to what he believed to be his duty, that man was Gregory. Often, no doubt, his view of that duty was lamentably narrow; but the defect should be imputed rather to the age in which he lived, than to the man hinself. Gregory at least lived honestly up to the light that was in him. His life was a perpetual war against evil as he understood it. "His goal," says Lau, "was always that which he acknowledged as the best."

We note his many splendid moral qualities—his unfailing sympathy with all who were in difficulties, whether it was a cleric deprived of his salary, or a slave-girl whose master refused to allow her to take the veil, or a noble lady in distress about her sins; his unswerving love of justice, which made him a refuge and defence alike for the oppressed provincial, the ill-used peasant on the Church estates, the official who suspected the fairness of his judges; the generosity, with which he beggared himself of all his property and lavished on the needy the

[1] A notable instance of his truculent sarcasm is *Epp.* iii. 52 (quoted above, pp. 204, 205); cf. also v. 37 (p. 212 *sqq.*). In both these cases Gregory points his shafts against the Patriarch John. For other instances of somewhat bitter humour, see *Epp.* i. 42; ii. 38, 50. We find him in more playful vein, *Epp.* i. 5, 6. Dean Church writes: "The vein of pleasantry, generally in the form of objurgation, which comes out in his letters, is something of the same kind as the humour of Pio Nono, and, like his, is sometimes savage." But it should be remarked that if Gregory was sometimes harsh to others, he did not spare himself. See, *e.g.*, his self-accusation in *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 11, § 5, 6.

Papal revenues which a meaner man might have applied to erecting buildings for the perpetuation of his own memory; the courage, which at duty's call enabled him "to face all extremities provided that I save my soul"; the genuine personal humility[1] (distinct from his pride in his office), which clothed him in vestments of inferior quality, which prompted him to do lowly obeisance to a Persian abbat who saluted him,[2] which caused him to speak of himself not only as the servant of all bishops,[3] but as unworthy of being reckoned even among the simple faithful[4]; his all-embracing charity; his unselfishness and self-forgetfulness even amid acute suffering of mind and body.

We note again his religious qualities—his delight in worship, his love of the Bible, his earnest desire to walk in the steps of his Master, his fervent zeal for saving souls. To him no exertion seemed to be too great, no labour too stupendous, if by it he might win some for God. His conception of religion, perhaps, was somewhat hard and unlovely. There was too much of the judgment, of tears and penance, of the fancies of the cloister. It lacked breadth and sunshine. But such as it was, Gregory clung to it with whole-hearted devotion. He believed that Christ called on him to make his life a fiery martyrdom; and a fiery martyrdom in very truth his life was made.

And lastly it should be observed that Gregory did his great

[1] Gregory's humility is much dwelt upon by the author of the *S. Gallen Life* (c. 7).

[2] See the story in John Moschus *Prat. Spirit. c.* 151.

[3] In some of his letters Gregory applies to himself the title "Servus servorum Dei." Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. 1 says that he adopted it as a protest against the "superstitiosum Universalis vocabulum" claimed by John of Constantinople. But Gregory himself says, "per episcopatus onera servus sum omnium factus" (*Epp.* xi. 26). John again asserts: "Primus omnium se in principio epistolarum suarum servum servorum Dei scribi satis humiliter definivit, cunctisque suis successoribus documentum suae humilitatis . . . hereditarium reliquit." But we meet with isolated instances of the use of the title before Gregory's time. Augustine (*Epp.* 217, *ad Vitalem*) subscribes himself, "Augustinus episcopus servus Christi et per ipsum servus servorum ipsius"; and Fulgentius is self-styled "servorum Christi famulus" (*Epp.* 5). Leo I. also uses the title in a letter to the Emperor Theodosius. After Gregory's death, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, in their letter to the Irish, call themselves "servi servorum Dei" (Baeda *H. E.* ii. 4). In the ninth century the title began to be used exclusively of the Pope.

[4] *Epp.* vii. 37.

work and lived his noble life in the midst of circumstances which might well have daunted even the most heroic.[1] His body was continually racked with cruel pain, from which he was unable to find relief. His mind was torn with incessant and increasing anxieties. On one side the swords of the barbarians hemmed him in, on the other he was exposed to the unscrupulous animosity of the Imperial officials. Few sympathized with him, hardly any understood him. Amid starving people, mutinous soldiers, greedy officials, intriguing bishops, untrustworthy agents, in the ruined capital of a desolated country he stood alone, without support save in his conscience and his God. Can we wonder that a man so sorely tried should have found at times his fortitude give way? that sometimes he should have spoken hasty words which, when his serenity was restored, he would have reason to regret? Surely the wonder rather is that Gregory, begirt with troubles, should have preserved so much sweetness of temper, should have retained, in spite of all, that gentleness, sobriety, and holy calm which marked him out emphatically as a "man of God."

And so, in conclusion, together with the whole Church, we may gratefully reverence the name of Gregory as that not only of a great man, but also of a great saint. In spite of his failings and many limitations, in spite of his typical Roman character, which tended to inspire more fear than love, the memory of Gregory will always be honoured throughout the Christian world. He is one of the great figures in ecclesiastical history, before whose eminent qualities ordinary men are compelled to bow in homage.

We remember little of the period in which he lived. Maurice is forgotten; the name of Phocas is associated only with the column in the Forum; the courtiers, bishops, patriarchs, and Imperial governors, have long since passed into oblivion with

[1] Paul. Diac. *Vita* 15: "Omni fere iuventutis suae tempore, ut verbis ipsius loquar, crebris viscerum cruciabatur doloribus, horis momentisque omnibus fracta stomachi virtute lassescebat, lentis quidem sed tamen continuis febribus anhelabat, frequens etiam eum gressuum dolor vehementer affligebat. . . . Fatigabat eum praeterea de ordinandis Urbis vigiliis ne ab hostibus caperetur sollicitudo continua. Urebant quoque incessanter eius animum filiorum hinc inde discrimina nuntiata. Sed tamen ille inter tot et talia deprehensus incommoda, nunquam otio indulgebat, quin aut filiorum utilitatibus inserviret aut aliquid dignum Ecclesiae scriberet aut per contemplationis gratiam coeli secretis interesset."

the majority of mankind. But out of this general dimness one majestic figure still stands clear. The man who gave a new character to the Papacy, who confirmed and fortified the system of monasticism, who popularized the doctrine of Augustine, who fixed the form which religious thought retained for centuries, who prepared the way for the separation of Italy from the Byzantine Empire, of the Western Church from that of the East—that man must surely be classed amid the ranks of the immortals.[1] So long as human history is studied and the memory of the mighty men continues to be cherished, the fame of St. Gregory the Great will not become obscure.

[1] Paul. Diac. *Vita* 29: "Quandiu mundi huius orbita volvitur, eius laudabile meritum semper accipit incrementum, quia ipsius sine dubio gloriae ascribitur, quod haec Romana civitas una cum sanctis apostolis eius precibus constare videtur, vel quia Anglorum Ecclesia nova semper subole fecundatur, vel quod illius doctrinis per orbem universum multi a peccatis elongati ad Christi clementiam convertuntur, vel quod boni quique eius suasionibus inflammati coelestem patriam desideranter inquirunt."

BOOK III

GREGORY THE FOURTH DOCTOR OF THE LATIN CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

GREGORY THE GREAT concludes the series of the classical teachers of the Western Church. With him the patristic age comes to an end, and the era of mediaeval Catholicism begins. He is the link which unites the dogmatic theology of Tertullian, Ambrose, and Augustine with the Scholastic speculation of the Middle Ages. He connects the Graeco-Roman with the Romano-Germanic type of Christianity. On the one hand, Gregory is the last of the great Latin Fathers. In his work the doctrinal development of the West is summed up. Out of the mass of current religious ideas and dogmatic conceptions, he selects and fixes such as seem to him to represent most accurately Catholic truth, or to be best adapted for the education of the new, half-civilized nations. And these ideas he simplifies as far as possible, casts them into sharp, clear forms, and so transmits them to the succeeding centuries. On the other hand, Gregory is the first representative of mediaeval Scholasticism. He indicates lines along which subsequent speculation is to travel. He accentuates and develops doctrines which are afterwards to be considered of first-rate importance in the Church. He establishes norms which for centuries are hardly ever broken through. And in his teaching we have a remarkable anticipation both of the Catholicism of the Middle Ages and of the common Catholic system of the present day. It is true, no doubt, that both these latter schemes are ultimately based upon Augustine; nevertheless, it is on Augustine modified, interpreted, and supplemented by Gregory the Great.

Important as Gregory's work undoubtedly is, whether it be studied in connexion with that of earlier or of later thinkers, it yet does not strike us as the product of a master-mind. Gregory was a man of action, a great practical genius, and we must

not expect to find him also a theologian of the first order. He cannot, of course, be compared with such a preeminent thinker as Augustine. Even among Doctors of the second rank, he is not, perhaps, particularly conspicuous. His faults are many. He is destitute of originality. He has neither freshness of thought nor depth of insight. He is extremely uncritical, and in his exegesis often puerile and absurd. His natural distaste for speculation renders him incapable of dealing efficiently with perplexed questions of dogma. His somewhat material, sensuous bent of mind inclined him to superstition. In all his many writings there are very few illuminating and original ideas. Almost everything that is good is borrowed. Nevertheless, Gregory has a real gift of grasping and setting forth clearly the conceptions of others, and of discriminating those which are in harmony with the general tendencies of the time. He is skilful in giving a tone to theology, in encasing its material in moulds not quickly to be broken, in laying the emphasis on certain aspects of doctrine which were destined to be much considered. And thus his exposition of the Christian science has exercised great influence on both the teaching and the practice of the Church. Following on his suggestions, religious speculation passed into new channels; a fresh field was conquered for dogma; and theology as a whole received from him an impression which has not yet worn off.

In order to arrive at an accurate conception of Gregory's theological work, it will be necessary to remark upon some personal characteristics of this author, which helped to determine the form of his doctrine. For this purpose it may be convenient to consider briefly the two following propositions. First, Gregory *was not* either a controversialist, or a man of learning, or a philosopher, or (in the strictest sense) a theologian. Secondly, Gregory *was* a preacher, a monk, a missionary, and a typical Roman lawyer and administrator.

(1) Taking first the negative proposition, I observe that Gregory was not a controversialist. At the close of the sixth century there were in the West no great controversies to sharpen the wits of a theologian. Against Arian, Nestorian, and Pelagian heretics the battle had been fought and won. Monophysitism had never extended much in Western Europe; Sabellianism and Manichaeism had at this time few adherents. Semi-Pelagianism

had been settled for a time by the Council of Orange. The Monothelete and later Adoptian opinions had not yet been ventilated. Within the limits of the Empire, Catholic orthodoxy had been established by a series of coercive measures. The Donatists indeed were still numerous in Africa, but there was no controversy with them. All that could be said against Donatism had been said already, and the Catholics now preferred force to argument. Outside the Empire, the orthodox faith was professed by the Franks, and had been accepted, at the commencement of Gregory's pontificate, by the Visigoths in Spain. The Lombards, it is true, were still Arian, but their queen Theudelinda was a Catholic. Thus, during the last decade of the sixth century there was a lull in religious controversy. The great questions of dogma were quiescent for the moment, and people, so far as they disputed at all, occupied themselves with minor topics—such, for instance, as whether marriage could be dissolved for the sake of retirement into a monastery, whether baptism gave entire remission of all sins, whether a man after three years' penance might return to sin, whether anathemas delivered under compulsion were binding on the conscience, whether it was permissible to work on the sabbath or to wash on Sunday.[1] Thus both the gains and the losses which accrue to men through polemical discussion were missed by Gregory. On the one hand, he was deprived of a great stimulus to independent thinking, of a great inducement to reconsider first principles and so to advance to deeper and more certain knowledge; on the other hand, he happily avoided that one-sidedness and limitation of view which is too often engendered in the atmosphere of disputation. The only controversies in which he personally engaged—on the possibility of ignorance in Christ and on the exact nature of the resurrection-body—were not of sufficient dimensions to affect his doctrine as a whole. Hence Gregory stands on a basis of his own, unshaken by collision with other men's opinions. His views throughout are fixed, precise, and clear. The inconsistencies and vacillations which we meet with in Augustine or Luther, are not found in him. Where he speaks with hesitation and contradicts himself—as on the subject of Predestination—he does so, not because controversy or meditation had induced him to modify his original

[1] *Epp.* xi. 27; xiii. 3.

opinions, but simply because he had never been able to formulate any definite view at all. When once he did succeed in making up his mind, he never seems to have changed. From first to last his deliberately formed opinions appear to have remained unaltered.

Again, Gregory was not a man of learning. He lived in an age of barbarism. The last lights of Western literature had gone out with Boethius and Cassiodorus. In Italy, Gaul, and Africa, Roman culture was well-nigh extinct. Europe was in a state of chaos, desolated by continual famine and disease, and overrun by hordes of barbarians. The Church was the only representative of civilization left standing in the West; and the Church, amid the stresses and distresses of the period, cared nothing for the things of the intellect. It is therefore not surprising that of the four great Latin Doctors, Gregory was by far the most unlearned. Unlike Jerome, he knew no Hebrew; unlike Ambrose and Augustine, he knew no Greek. Of the whole of Eastern theology he was ignorant. Of the Western theologians, he was well acquainted with Augustine, and had studied Ambrose: Jerome also he had read in portions, and possibly Cyprian. But Augustine was the only author whom he really knew. In the history of controversy he was curiously uninstructed; we learn from his letters that he had never heard even of so notable a personage as Eudoxius.[1] Of the literature of paganism he disapproved.[2] He was, it is true, a diligent student of Holy Scripture, but his thorough knowledge of the text was, to a great extent, vitiated by his allegorical exegesis. This limitation in respect of his knowledge will in part account for two characteristics which are observed in Gregory's theology: the close following of Augustine, and the dogmatic treatment of popular opinion and tradition. Cut off as he was from literature as a whole, Gregory was driven to reflect on the theories of the one great writer whom he knew, and on the principles and presuppositions of the popular ecclesiasticism in the midst of which he lived. Had he possessed a larger share of learning, he would no doubt have avoided many faults for which he is reproached, but it is possible that his doctrine would have been less interesting than it is.

[1] *Epp.* vii. 5, 31; viii. 29.

[2] See above, Vol. I. p. 283 *sqq.*

Once more, Gregory was not a philosopher, although he passed as such among his contemporaries. He had a supreme distrust of abstract thought. The pure speculations of theology seemed to him as futile and pernicious as did the pure speculations of philosophy to Francis Bacon. Whenever possible he avoided such questions altogether, and if he touched upon them at all, he did so only at the point at which they appeared to have some bearing on practical life. For, in Gregory's view, theology was concerned with the elevation of the human will, and not with the necessities of the intellect. He regarded the restless spirit of curiosity which prompted men to pry into the Divine secrets, as the source of all heretical tendencies.[1] And over and over again in his works he solemnly warns his hearers to refrain from rash investigation, and to acquiesce humbly in their necessary ignorance of God's inscrutable mysteries. "Let man come to the consciousness of his ignorance, that he may fear. Let him fear, that he may humble himself. Let him humble himself, that he may place no confidence in himself. Let him place no confidence in himself, that he may learn to seek the help of his Creator; and, when he has come to know that in self-confidence nothing is to be found but death, he may, by appropriating the help of his Creator, return to life."[2] The elucidation of philosophical problems, then, will not be found in Gregory. He took his stand on authority and tradition, and resolutely refused to criticize the matter of dogma or to examine first premises. The most that he attempted was the formal treatment of problems, the dialectical exposition of doctrines received "ex auctoritate." He explained, analyzed, reasoned—often displaying no small power of thought and argument—but he rarely penetrated to the inner convincing reason of the things explained. Dogma was for him an external something which must be believed, and he did not succeed in effecting a reunion of this objective truth with the consciousness of the Church and of individual Christians.

Finally, Gregory was not, in the strict sense of the term, a theologian. He never built up a symmetrical system of doctrine; he never published a scientific exposition of any theological topic. He wrote no dogmatic treatises. He is careless in his

[1] *Mor.* xx. 18. [2] *Ibid.* xxix. 77.

definitions, slipshod in his formulas, disorderly in his treatment of subjects. His most precise dogmatic statements are found in the *Dialogues*, a popular collection of anecdotes of saints. The rest are scattered up and down in sermons, in lectures delivered to monks, in a manual for the use of bishops. Hence it is not easy to reproduce his views with certainty or exactness. For although, by the collection and comparison of many different passages, the general character and object of Gregory's teaching becomes sufficiently clear, there is yet always a danger that incidental statements of opinion may be pressed into unreasonable prominence, and that what Gregory himself would have considered the more important parts of his doctrine be too much neglected. In dealing with individual pronouncements of so unsystematic a divine, there is need of the greatest caution.

(2) Having completed the examination of the negative proposition, which sets forth what Gregory was not, we may pass on to the second and positive proposition, which may throw some further light on the peculiarities of his theology. In the first place, then, Gregory was a preacher. He regarded the work of preaching as one of the principal functions of the episcopal office.[1] In his *Pastoral Care* he devotes a whole book to the treatment of this subject; and in his letters he is continually reproaching the bishops for their neglect of this important business. He himself was most diligent in this respect, as is proved by the large collection of discourses which have come down to us: and we know that, of all the duties he was called upon to perform, this of admonishing his flock, whether collectively or in private conversations, was the one to which he attributed the highest importance. This circumstance is interesting, inasmuch as it accounts for the practical, evangelical element in Gregory's theology. Throughout his teaching on ecclesiastical forms, institutions, and the like, Gregory never lost sight of the fact that the spiritual communion of the soul with God is the main thing. This conception is continually breaking through the formal ecclesiasticism in which it is enveloped, preventing that ecclesiasticism from hardening and becoming rigid; and in consequence of it Gregory never drew those ultimate deductions which the Schoolmen did not hesitate

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 17, § 9, 14; *Epp.* i. 24. See also above, Vol. I. p. 251 *sqq.*

to infer from his premises. In his case the zeal of the evangelist triumphed over strict logic.

Again, Gregory was a monk—the first who ever mounted into the chair of Peter. And his theology seems to reflect the austerity of the cloister. Here God is represented as the Requiter, who leaves no sin unpunished: Christ is the propitiatory Offering: the Church is a penitential institute. Here we have sin connected with concupiscence; conjugal intercourse is represented as never innocent; humility is the highest virtue; the conceptions of contrition, of contemplation, of penalties and merits are insisted on; the perfect life is said to be the imitation of death. Asceticism is the dominant note in Gregory's teaching. Lest, however, an exaggerated estimate be attached to this aspect of his doctrine, it should be remembered that the *Morals* were addressed only to monks, the *Pastoral Care* only to bishops and priests, and the *Homilies* to a people from whom earthly prosperity seemed to have departed for ever. But even when due allowance is made for these facts, the severe, ascetic tone of the theology is sufficiently remarkable.

Further, Gregory was a missionary, labouring incessantly for the education of barbarian peoples. In their interest he endeavoured to express doctrine in a simple form, suited to their comprehension; bringing to the front such ideas as were most acceptable to rude intelligences. Hence he sanctioned, to a certain extent, a religion of external legality, emphasized the value of rites, and elaborated the doctrines of angels, saints, demons, purgatory, heaven, and hell. Thus expounded, Christianity was capable of making strong appeal to nations sunk in superstition and magic, and quite incompetent to apprehend it on its higher side. It was, perhaps, the only form in which the religion could have survived the Middle Ages. And therefore Gregory's activity in this direction, much as it has been criticized, was not without utility and value.

Lastly, Gregory was a typical Roman, both in his legalism and in his capacity for organization. He looked upon religion from the standpoint of law and discipline. The rights and duties of the Christian life are set forth juristically, and dogma is expounded with the aid of conceptions derived from civil law. In illustration of this I may refer to Gregory's view of the relationship of God to Christ, and of Christ to man

and to the devil. But his entire theology bears the legal stamp. It centres in ideas of guilt, merit, satisfaction, penance; and by means of these it may be wholly construed. Retribution and merit are the conceptions which determine its form. God's dealing with mankind is resolved into a series of legal transactions, and Christ, the saints and angels, and the devil have all their parts in the legal process. In setting forth this scheme, of course, Gregory was but reverting to the standpoint of the old theological jurist, Tertullian, who was the first to graft into theology the categories of law. Yet with Gregory these conceptions are modified and softened by being brought into connexion with others of a different and essentially spiritual character, the Augustinian doctrines of faith, love, and grace. These vital ideas are fitted into the legal framework, and counteract the harshness of the statutory forms. In spite of this, however, the general tone of Gregory's theology is legal. "Man must appease the Judge and atone for sin by works" is his fundamental principle, though he adds that "Works themselves are from the grace of God."

A Roman lawyer, Gregory likewise inherited from his ancestors the Roman genius for organization. He was a great administrator, a man of institutions, with a talent for ordering complex affairs. And this trait, too, comes out in his theology—particularly in the doctrine of the Church and Sacraments. Man is to be saved by obedience, by complying with ecclesiastical regulations, by performing definite duties. God's grace is given through ordinances, rites, and ceremonies. Ecclesiastical institutions are essential for salvation. In this circle of ideas we can readily trace the thought of the Roman administrator who sought to govern the souls of men by contrivances analogous to those of politics—by associating doctrine with Church government, and making faith synonymous with obedience. Here, once more, however, Gregory keeps clear of any mere mechanical conception. Throughout his teaching the spiritual significance of ecclesiastical institutions is brought well to the front.

The foregoing observations will have explained to some extent the form of Gregory's theology. It remains now to consider the sources from which the matter of it is derived. These may roughly be reduced to three:—the Symbol, the doctrines

of Augustine, and the body of more or less indefinite popular notions, derived partly from paganism, partly from the Roman ritual and cultus. Out of these diverse elements Gregory's theology is developed; and there are no doctrines of importance which may not be traced to one or other of these sources.

The first source of doctrine is the Symbol. The statements of the Creeds are accepted by Gregory without hesitation, almost without examination. The doctrines of the Trinity in Unity, of the Two Natures in One Person, of the One Holy Catholic Church outside of which there could be no salvation, of the necessity of Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, of the judgment and retribution,—had received the official stamp, and were adopted as of course, without anxious investigation. As established and undisputed dogmas they had passed into the background of the theological mind, and no longer provoked inquiry or discussion. The attention of churchmen was now directed to other questions—the new ideas of sin, grace, and predestination, and their precise connexion with the older problems. And, in consequence of this, the propositions of the Symbol, formally repeated, were often but imperfectly understood, so that under the guise of orthodoxy new errors frequently grew up and circulated. We find an instance of this in Gregory, who, while repeating the Chalcedonian formulas, cherished views on the Incarnation distinctly doketic in tendency. For the rest, he reiterates the orthodox doctrines, but passes them over rapidly, rarely attempting to throw fresh light upon them or to display them from new points of view. Here he is not so much a teacher as a scholar repeating a lesson he has learned. Hence that part of his theology which is derived directly from the Symbol is, perhaps, the least valuable and instructive portion of his work.

The second source is Augustine. Gregory's admiration for the genius of Augustine was unbounded. "If you desire to take your fill of delicious food," he wrote to one who asked for a copy of his own Commentary on Job, "read the works of the blessed Augustine, and seek not our chaff in comparison with his fine wheat."[1] So again in his preface to the *Homilies on Ezekiel*, he likens his own writings to a paltry stream, from which no one should care to drink who had been accustomed

[1] *Epp.* x. 16.

to the swiftly flowing rivers, deep and clear, of Ambrose and Augustine. His debt to the great African was enormous; perhaps there has never been an author who owed more to the writings of another. The doctrines of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, of the Church, are taken directly from Augustine: the doctrines of sin and grace are, of course, Augustinian, though combined with semi-Pelagian conceptions: the doctrines of angels, saints, demons, penance, purgatory, and the last things, contain many Augustinian elements, though they are derived mainly from popular current beliefs. It is, no doubt, with the formal and legal side of Augustine's teaching that Gregory finds himself most in sympathy; *e.g.* his doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments. But he does not hesitate to follow the master also in his views on redemption, justification, love, the value of Scripture, the possession of the living God. There is, indeed, no portion of Gregory's work where Augustinian influence is not traceable; while there are many portions which, even to the wording, are taken directly from the books of the Bishop of Hippo. Instances of this close following will be frequently noticed in the ensuing pages. Here it is sufficient to remark that Gregory, while adopting Augustinianism, to some extent debased it. He retained its superficial form, without its profound meaning. He toned it down, mutilating it on certain sides, and adapting it to vulgar intelligences. The Augustinianism which Gregory passed over to the Middle Ages does not represent the true Augustine.

The third source is the body of common popular ideas, some of which were inherited from paganism, while others had sprung up in connexion with the ritual and practice of the Church. These ideas were as yet undefined. They were fostered in the imagination of the people, but not yet presented clearly to the understanding. They were felt rather than expressed. It was Gregory's work, however, to give shape to these vague conceptions, to define them with precision, and to restore them as doctrines to the consciousness of the Church. Thus we get the religious fancies of an ignorant clergy and laity expressed in dogmatic formulas; and the current conceptions of angels, saints, demons, miracles, penances, satisfactions, purgatory, heaven and hell, are brought in to supplement the older theology. This is, perhaps, the most interesting part of

Gregory's teaching, and also the part which at first sight appears to be most original. It is clear, however, that Gregory was not initiating any new doctrine, but was merely treating systematically the vague notions of the people of his time. Here, as elsewhere, he found his material provided, and he himself supplied only the form. Nevertheless, the definitions he struck out are sufficiently remarkable, and their influence on the development of theology has been momentous.

I will now proceed to a detailed exposition of Gregory's opinions, dealing first with the Theology proper, and afterwards with his doctrine of Man and the Means of Grace.

PART I

GREGORY'S THEOLOGY

GREGORY'S Theology is based on the Symbol, supplemented by Augustine. To the popular ecclesiasticism, however, must be attributed the doctrines of the Angels, Demons, and Saints, dealt with in the last two sections. The whole subject will be here considered under the following headings:—

(1) The sources of Religious Knowledge.
(2) The doctrine of God.
(3) The doctrine of Christ.
(4) The doctrine of the Holy Spirit.
(5) The doctrine of Angels and Demons.
(6) The doctrine of Saints.

SECTION I.—THE SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.

The problem of the relation of Reason to Authority, of Faith to Knowledge, had been left unsolved by Augustine, and to its elucidation Gregory contributed nothing. But his dislike of theological and philosophical speculation, combined with a profound consciousness of the limitations of his own knowledge, inclined him to depreciate the function of reason, and to lay all the stress on faith and authority. "The knowledge of God," he says, "appertains to faith."[1] "Faith leads the way to understanding."[2] He constantly attacks the presumption of men who try to comprehend by reason the transcendent mysteries of faith, and he deliberately refuses to investigate many questions which had been or have been since discussed with good results. To Gregory the highest science was nescience. "The human mind," he says, "cannot scrutinize the secrets of God."[3] His

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 10, § 17: "Notitia Dei ad fidem pertinet."
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 5, § 17.
[3] *Mor.* xvi. 81; cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, § 4.

wonderful doings should be earnestly pondered, but never examined in the spirit of intellectual curiosity. Faith must accept them, but reason must hold aloof.[1] For where would be the wonder of God's doings if they could be understood? Or, where the merit of faith if proof could be supplied by reason?[2] The power of God is sufficient reason for all He does.[3] Hence man's proper attitude is one of intellectual humility, which does not aim at knowing more than it should.[4] For ignorance accompanied with humility is more tolerable to God than deep comprehension with pride.[5]

This wise ignorance is one of the marks by which Catholics may be distinguished from heretics.[6] Holy Church is well aware that never in this world will she be wholly free from ignorance.[7] Hence she is not ashamed to admit that there are many things appertaining to faith which she cannot rationally explain, and she makes no attempt, like the heretics, to search into hidden things beyond her powers. She prefers not to know things which she cannot fathom, rather than to rashly define what she does not know.[8] Thus she herself keeps the spirit of humility, and inculcates the same on her sons with wise discretion. "If she observes any one hungering for that which it would not be good for him to get, then, if she knows that thing, she keeps it back with reserve; if she knows it not, she confesses it with humility. And thus she recalls men to a sense of well-regulated humility, when she bids every one by her Preacher, not to be wise of himself above that he ought to think, but to think soberly."[9] And the true children of the Church accept her words with faith, without venturing to question them:

[1] *Mor.* vi. 19: "Sciendum est quia divina miracula et semper debent considerari per studium, et nunquam discuti per intellectum. Saepe namque humanus sensus dum quarumdam rerum rationem quaerens non invenit, in dubitationis se voraginem mergit. . . . Mira igitur ex fide credenda sunt, perscrutanda per rationem non sunt; quia si haec nostris oculis ratio expanderet mira non essent."

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 1.

[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, § 10: "Divinae virtutis mysteria, quae comprehendi non possunt, non intellectu discutienda sunt, sed fide veneranda. Sciendum itaque nobis est quia quidquid ratione hominis comprehendi potest mirum esse iam non potest, sed sola est in miraculis ratio potentia facientis." Cf. *Hom. in Ev.* 22, § 8, *ad fin.*

[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 1, § 18.

[5] *Mor.* xvii. 15.

[6] *Mor.* vii. 50.

[7] *Ibid.* iv. 19.

[8] *Ibid.* xiv. 32.

[9] *Ibid.* xvi. 8.

"That they may be able to profit by her words, they hear them not to judge but to follow them." [1]

But while Gregory emphasizes the incompetence of the human reason for apprehending Divine mysteries, he is very far from upholding any such blind faith as would exclude rational investigation altogether. In one passage, at any rate, which may be taken as representing his general views upon the subject, he distinctly teaches that authority itself must appeal to reason. "Holy Church," he says in effect, "does not teach by mere authority, but requires faith on rational grounds of conviction. And even when she presents matters incomprehensible by reason, she rationally advises that human reason should not be too eager to fathom what is incomprehensible." [2]

What, then, are the authoritative sources of religious knowledge? Gregory recognizes two—the Bible and Tradition. On the one hand, he has the deepest reverence for the authority of Scripture, asserting in the most positive manner that all religious teaching must be grounded and based upon its statements, and alleging it to be a mark of heresy to bring forward doctrines "which are not maintained in the pages of the sacred books." [3] On the other hand, he looks to the Fathers and Councils as indisputable authorities in matters of faith. He roundly declares that he "receives and venerates" the Four General Councils "as the four books of the Holy Gospel," for on those Councils, "as on a four-square stone," is raised the structure of the holy Faith, and whoever holds not fast by them is really

[1] *Mor.* xx. 2.

[2] *Ibid.* viii. 3: "Quia vero sancta Ecclesia ex magisterio humilitatis instituta, recta quae errantibus dicit, non quasi ex auctoritate praecipit, sed ex ratione persuadet, bene nunc dicitur: *Videte an mentiar.* Ac si aperte dicat: Ea quae assero nequaquam mihi ex auctoritate credite, sed an vera sint ex ratione pensate. Quae et si quando dicit quod ratione comprehendi non valet, ne de occultis humana ratio quaeri debeat, rationabiliter suadet."

[3] *Ibid.* xviii. 39: "Qui ad verae praedicationis verba se praeparat, necesse est ut causarum origines a sacris paginis sumat, ut omne quod loquitur ad divinae auctoritatis fundamentum revocet, atque in eo aedificium locutionis suae firmet. Ut enim praediximus, saepe haeretici dum sua student perversa astruere, ea proferunt quae profecto in sacrorum librorum paginis non tenentur. Unde et discipulum suum praedicator egregius admonet, dicens: *O Timothee, depositum custodi, devitans profanas vocum novitates;* quia dum laudari haeretici tanquam de excellenti ingenio cupiunt, quasi nova quaedam proferunt, quae in antiquorum Patrum libris veteribus non tenentur; sicque fit ut dum videri sapientes desiderant, miseris suis auditoribus stultitiae semina spargant."

outside the building, however much he may appear to be a part of it.[1] Gregory, indeed, makes no explicit attempt to mediate between the Bible and Tradition, or to work out the relation of the one to the other. Like Augustine before him, he leaves the question open. Nevertheless, there are indications that he did not regard them as two independent authorities of equal importance. Rather, he seems to look upon Scripture as the final and supreme authority, of which Tradition was the handmaid rather than the rival. As a matter of fact, Gregory could not conceive the possibility of a conflict between Scripture and Tradition. The Church, he taught, has indeed elaborated and amplified the doctrine of the Apostles, for she has collected together the brief sayings of the Apostles and early Fathers, and, by uniting testimonies to testimonies, has drawn up a body of dogma. But though the doctrine of the Church has been elaborated, it is yet derived entirely from the Apostles, from whom later expositors get all their wisdom.[2] The Church, in her dogma, does but bring to light the hidden things of Scripture and clear up obscurities.[3] Hence Tradition remains a supplement, which is of value only in so far as it gives accurate expression to Scriptural truth. The ultimate appeal is to Scripture itself; and the propagation of Scripture throughout the world is the *raison d'être* of the Church.[4]

Certainly Gregory is second to none in his knowledge of and enthusiasm for Holy Writ. He alludes to it always in terms of glowing admiration. It is the "lantern" which illumines the night of this life,[5] the "banquet" which God spreads for His people,[6] "an epistle of Almighty God to His creatures."[7] It is adapted to every kind of mind and character, so that every man can learn from it the lesson he most needs.[8] It answers the inquiries of every individual.[9] It teaches man to know God; it

[1] *Epp.* i. 24; cf. *ibid.* iii. 10.
[2] *Mor.* xxvii. 14, 15.
[3] *Mor.* xviii. 60.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, § 37.
[5] *Reg. Past.* iii. 24.
[6] *Epp.* ii. 50.
[7] *Epp.* v. 46.
[8] *Mor.* vi. 22.
[9] *Mor.* xxiii. 34: "Deus singulorum cordibus privatis vocibus non respondet, sed tale eloquium construit per quod cunctorum quaestionibus satisfaciat. In scripturae quippe eius eloquio causas nostras singuli si requirimus, invenimus, nec opus est ut in eo quod specialiter quisque tolerat responderi sibi divina voce specialiter quaerat. Ibi enim nobis omnibus in eo quod specialiter patimur communiter respondetur, ibi vita praecedentium fit forma sequentium."

teaches him also to know himself; for it is "a kind of mirror," reflecting the beauties and deformities of humanity, and instructing us as to the virtues we ought to imitate, and the faults we should avoid.[1] Through it we are vivified by the gift of the Spirit, and enabled to cast away the works of death and darkness.[2] Every part of it is of supreme interest and importance, and—at any rate, for the purposes of practical instruction—the non-canonical books may be drawn upon equally with those included in the Canon.[3] Gregory is never tired of urging his clergy to study their Bibles, and he is not less eager to impress this duty upon laymen. The following words, taken from a letter to a physician at Constantinople, prove that Gregory was far from regarding the Bible as the exclusive property of the clergy: "The Emperor of Heaven, the Lord of men and angels, has sent you His epistles for your life's behoof—and yet you neglect to read them eagerly. Study them, I beg you, and meditate daily on the words of your Creator. Learn the heart of God in the words of God, that you may sigh more eagerly for the things eternal, that your soul may be kindled with greater longings for heavenly joys."[4]

Gregory's general view of Holy Scripture may be summed up in the following passage of the *Magna Moralia*: "Holy Scripture," he writes, "is incomparably superior to every form of knowledge and science. It preaches the truth and calls us to the heavenly fatherland; it turns the heart of the reader from earthly to heavenly desires; it exercises the strong by its obscurer sayings, and attracts the little ones by its simple language; it is neither so closed to view as to inspire fear, nor so open as to be despised, but familiarity with it removes distaste for it, and the more it is studied the more it is loved; it helps the reader's mind by simple words and raises it by heavenly meanings; it grows, if one may so speak, with its readers, for the ignorant find therein what they already know, and the learned find therein something always new. I say nothing of this, however. I do not dwell on the importance of

[1] *Mor.* ii. 1. [2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 11.

[3] *Mor.* xix. 34: "Non inordinate agimus, si ex libris licet non canonicis, sed tamen ad aedificationem Ecclesiae editis, testimonium proferamus." Among the "libri non canonici," Gregory reckoned 1 Maccabees. (For an attempt to explain this, see Migne *P. L.* lxxv. p. 34.)

[4] *Epp.* v. 46.

the subject-matter. But I do say that Holy Scripture is superior to every form of knowledge and science even in the very manner of its speech. For with one and the same word it at once narrates a fact and sets forth a mystery. It can speak of the past, and, in so doing, predict the future. And, without any change of language, it can both describe what has been done, and in the selfsame words declare what is to be done."[1]

Such being Gregory's general view of Holy Scripture, it remains to consider his opinions on certain particular points, viz. on the subject of Scripture, on the inspiration of Scripture, and on the interpretation of Scripture.

(*a*) *The Subject-matter of Scripture.* According to Gregory, the subject-matter of every part of the Bible is the same—the revelation of God in Christ. This is the key which unlocks the meaning of every book. The whole of Scripture begins and ends in Christ, and every word and act that is recorded receives in Him its ultimate significance.[2] He is the centre of the Old Testament as well as of the New. The one foretells by allegory and prophecy that which the other openly proclaims. The last lies concealed in the first; or, as Gregory puts it, "the Old Testament is the prophecy of the New, the New the explanation of the Old."[3] Christ is foreshadowed in the Old Testament, not only in its strictly prophetical utterances, but also in its historical narratives—"all the elect, being His forerunners in holiness of life, gave a prophetic promise of His coming by their actions and by their words. Every just man was in figure a herald of Christ"[4]—and not only in its historical narratives, but even in its legal and ceremonial precepts.[5] Every part of

[1] *Mor.* xx. 1.

[2] *Ibid.* vi. 1.

[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 12: "In Testamenti Veteris littera Testamentum Novum latuit per allegoriam." *Ibid.* § 15: "Utraque Testamenta ita sibi in Mediatore Dei et hominum congruunt, ut quod unum designat hoc alterum exhibeat. . . . Inest Testamento Veteri Testamentum Novum. Et quod Testamentum Vetus promisit, hoc Novum exhibuit; et quod illud occulte annuntiat, hoc istud exhibitum aperte clamat. Prophetia ergo Testamenti Novi Testamentum Vetus est; et expositio Testamenti Veteris Testamentum Novum." *Mor.* xxix. 73: "Per omne quod Testamentum Vetus loquitur, Testamenti Novi opera nuntiantur."

[4] *Mor.* Praef. 14. Gregory taught, like Augustine, that even the evil deeds of such men might be symbolical of Divine mysteries. Thus, in *Mor.* iii. 55, he explains the story of David, Bathsheba, and Uriah as typifying the relation of Christ to the Law and to the Jewish people.

[5] See *e.g. Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 15, for an allegorical explanation of the law

it has an interior meaning which is plain to all who will study it in the light of the Incarnation. The Old Testament is the New in symbol; and the New Testament is the Old made clear.

As a consequence of this view respecting the subject-matter of Scripture, Gregory could recognize only a relative distinction between the Old Testament and the New. Christianity, after all, is as old as the world. The teachers of the old dispensation were divided, indeed, in time from the Apostles, but they were united with them in the intention of their preaching and in the subject which they preached. For all alike proclaimed the same Person and the same "sacraments of faith."[1] Thus, for instance, the Lamb of God was preached by Abel, Isaiah, and by John the Baptist—by Abel, in a symbol, by his offering; by Isaiah, when he foretold Him who "*as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth*"; by John, who pointed Him out, with "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*"[2] Or again, the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity was proclaimed alike by David, Isaiah, and St. Paul. David set it forth when he sang, "*And God, even our own God, shall give us His blessing. God shall bless us,*" adding, "*And all the ends of the earth shall fear Him*"; Isaiah signified the same with his "*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts*"; and St. Paul by his words: "*Of Him and through Him and in Him are all things,*" and "*To Him be glory for ever and ever.*"[3] Hence Gregory concludes that, in all things essential, the faith of the two orders of saints was the same, and their teaching as embodied in the sacred books was to the same purpose and effect. In a word, the Bible seemed to him to be

of the homicide (Numb. xxxv. 25), and of the position of the mercy-seat between the golden cherubim.

[1] *Mor.* xxix. 68: "Omnes sancti aliis atque aliis ad praedicandum temporibus apparentes, et disiuncti sunt per visionem suae imaginis, et coniuncti per intentionem mentis. Simul micant quod unum praedicant; sed non semet ipsos tangunt, quia in divisis temporibus partiuntur." *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 3, § 16: "(Antiqui patres) non divisi a sancta Ecclesia fuerunt, quia mente, opere, praedicatione, ista iam fidei sacramenta tenuerunt, istam sanctae Ecclesiae celsitudinem conspexerunt, quam nos non adhuc praestolando, sed iam habendo conspicimus. Sicut enim nos in praeterita passione Redemptoris nostri, ita illi per fidem in eadem ventura sunt salvati. Illi ergo foris non extra mysterium, sed extra tempus." Cf. *Mor.* ix. 48.

[2] *Ibid.* xxix. 69.

[3] *Ibid.* xxix. 70; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 7.

a single book dealing with a single theme. The meaning of every part, whether stated obscurely or in clear language, is one.

Nevertheless, although Gregory was led by his mystical exegesis to minimize the distinction between the Old and New Testaments, he had no desire to obliterate that distinction altogether. He was a believer in the doctrine of development, and recognized that perfection is nowhere attained at once. In religion—whether in the intellectual apprehension of it or in the practical exposition of it—man advances slowly and by degrees.[1] Hence, in reviewing the religion of Scripture, Gregory acknowledged a real evolution. The New Testament, he taught, represents a genuine advance on the Old, in respect both of its Law and of its Doctrine. (*a*) The Law of the New Testament is on a higher plane than that of the Old. For the human race was weaned from its carnal life by a progressive course of preaching. First were given the precepts of the law to restrain men from evil deeds; afterwards "the testament of new grace" to restrain men from evil thoughts.[2] The old law was the law of fear and bondage; the new law was the law of love and liberty.[3] The old law was partial and condescended to human infirmity; the new law was complete and made exacting claims on man.[4] The old law merely pointed out sin; the new law by the grace of Christ eradicated sin.[5] (*β*) And so again, the Doctrine of the New Testament was an advance upon that of the Old. The truth was developed in time. Moses knew more of things divine than Abraham; the Prophets knew more than Moses; the Apostles more than the Prophets.[6] Hence, although Christ was known indeed to the Fathers of the Old Testament, yet their knowledge of Him was imperfect as compared with that of the Evangelists and Apostles. And this imperfect doctrine of the Old Testament was further obscured by being published

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 3, § 3: "Sive in cognitione Mediatoris Dei et hominum, hominis Iesu Christi, seu in scientia divini eloquii, seu in ipsa fide quam de illo accepimus, quibusdam gradibus ad altiora incrementa pervenimus. Nemo enim repente fit summus, sed in bona conversatione a minimis quisque inchoat ut ad magna perveniat." Cf. *Mor.* ii. 35; xxii. 46 *sqq.* For a practical application of this doctrine, see *Epp.* xi. 56.

[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 3, § 16; *Mor.* xxviii. 40.

[3] *Mor.* xi. 55; xxviii. 41.

[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 9; ii. 9, § 2.

[5] *Mor.* xviii. 73; vii. 9.

[6] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 12.

under the form of symbol and allegory, so that the common people could understand only the letter, but was unable to comprehend the inner meaning.[1] There was need, then, of the Gospel to reveal the hidden significance of the Law and the Prophets. The truths of the Synagogue could be comprehended in their fulness only in the light of the faith of the Church.[2]

Thus Gregory, while asserting an identity of subject-matter in the Old and New Testaments, was yet careful to point out their respective differences. It must be admitted, however, that in his enthusiastic application of his favourite principle—Christ the subject of all Scripture—he often allowed himself to ignore this distinction, or to resolve it into a mere difference in respect of the time of publication. But such unguarded expressions as seem to imply this should not be pressed. Gregory was saved from the extreme consequence of his mystical exegesis by his doctrine of development; though mysticism so far prevailed with him that he made the distinction between the Old and New Testaments as slight as possible.

(*b*) *The Inspiration of Scripture.* Gregory, as we have just seen, taught that the subject of all Scripture is one. He also taught that the Author of all Scripture is one, namely, the Holy Spirit. His idea of inspiration was external and mechanical. Augustine had compared the Apostles to the hands which noted down what Christ, the Head, dictated. Gregory went a step further, and compared the sacred writers to the pens with which the Holy Spirit wrote. Hence he summarily condemns as futile all inquiry into the authorship of the several books of the Bible. We know already the true Author of each document, the Holy Spirit, and we understand what He says to us; why, then, should we be curious to learn what pen imprinted the Divine words on the page?[3] The

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 9; *Mor.* xviii. 60.

[2] *Mor.* ix. 47; xviii. 60; xxix. 73.

[3] *Ibid.* Praef. 2: "Sed quis haec scripserit, valde supervacue quaeritur, cum tamen auctor libri Spiritus sanctus fideliter credatur. Ipse igitur haec scripsit, qui scribenda dictavit. Ipse scripsit, qui et in illius opere inspirator exstitit, et per scribentis vocem imitanda ad nos eius facta transmisit. Si magni cuiusdam viri susceptis epistolis legeremus verba, sed quo calamo fuissent scripta quaereremus, ridiculum profecto esset epistolarum auctorem scire sensumque cognoscere, sed quali calamo earum verba impressa fuerint

sacred penmen are entirely passive under inspiration. "When filled with the Holy Spirit, they are rapt above themselves, and become, as it were, beside themselves"; and in this state of ecstasy they speak the words of Another. The inspired men, indeed, utter the words, but the words are of the Spirit, who speaks through the inspired men.[1] Thus we find in Gregory a doctrine of "verbal inspiration" in the most literal acceptation of the phrase. The Spirit is held responsible, not only for the general contents, but also for the actual words of Scripture; and in consequence even the slightest and most casual expressions of the Bible become invested with profound significance,[2] and the popular mystical exegesis receives a justification. How Gregory, on this theory, would have accounted for the barbarisms and solecisms of the original documents (which he was unable to read) remains uncertain. He merely notes, in passing, these blemishes in the Latin translations, and apologizes for the grammatical defects of his own commentary on the ground that it would be "in the highest degree improper to submit the words of the Divine Oracle to the rules of Donatus."[3]

(*c*) *The Interpretation of Scripture.* Holy Scripture is, to Gregory, "a book written within and without." It has a superficial meaning and a deeper meaning. It is at once open and secret, letter and spirit, history and allegory.[4] In its obscurer parts it is meat which must be broken in pieces by explanation before it can be absorbed; in its open parts it is

indagare. Cum ergo rem cognoscimus, eiusque rei Spiritum sanctum auctorem tenemus, quia scriptorem quaerimus, quid aliud agimus, nisi legentes litteras, de calamo percontamur?"

[1] *Mor.* Praef. 3; cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 8.

[2] *Mor.* ii. 2; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 12, § 1.

[3] *Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 5.

[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 30: "Liber sacri eloquii intus scriptus est per allegoriam, foris per historiam. Intus per spiritalem intellectum, foris autem per sensum litterae simplicem, adhuc infirmantibus congruentem. Intus, quia invisibilia promittit; foris, quia visibilia praeceptorum suorum rectitudine disponit. Intus, quia caelestia pollicetur; foris autem, quia terrena contemptibilia qualiter sint vel in usu habenda, vel ex desiderio fugienda, praecipit. Alia namque de secretis caelestibus loquitur, alia vero in exterioribus actionibus iubet. Et ea quidem quae foris praecipit patent, sed illa quae de internis narrat plene apprehendi nequeunt." Cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 1, § 3; *ibid.* ii. 3, § 18; *ibid.* ii. 5, § 4; *Mor.* xvi. 24. In *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 1, the "utilitas" of the "obscuritas eloquiorum Dei" is commented on.

wine which may be imbibed as it is found.[1] Its plain truths nourish the simple-minded, and the mystery which those truths conceal exercises the understanding of the wise.[2] Gregory compares it to a river which is both shallow and deep in such a way that the lamb can find a footing and the elephant can float.[3] It is rich in wisdom in proportion to man's capacity for understanding it.[4] It grows with the mind of the student. "As is the reader, so is the Book."[5]

To rest satisfied with the literal and obvious sense of a passage of Holy Writ was to Gregory a sign of an immature or careless intellect. The wise must probe the deeper meaning. And the method of research was determined for Gregory by two considerations. The first of these was his doctrine that Christ is the subject of all Scripture, so that every part of it must be understood as referring to Him. The second was his doctrine of the intimate communion subsisting between Christ and His Church, in virtue of which whatever can be referred to Christ, the Head, can also be referred to the Church, His Body, and to all the individual members thereof.[6] Thus, for example, Job is a type of Christ, and, because of Christ, therefore also of the Church, the Body of Christ, and of every individual Christian. And all that happened to Job may be understood as prophetical or symbolical of what would afterwards happen to Christ and to all His saints. Under the influence of these two considerations, then, Gregory propounds a threefold sense of Scripture. First, there is the historical or literal sense of Scripture as it stands. Secondly, there is the allegorical or typical sense of Scripture, understood as referring to Christ. And thirdly, there is the moral sense of Scripture, taken as referring to the Church or to individual Christians.[7]

This threefold method of interpretation is, of course, strictly applicable only to the Old Testament. It is evident, however,

[1] *Mor.* i. 29; *Reg. Past.* iii. 24.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 31; ii. 5, § 4.
[3] *Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 4.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 9.
[5] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 16.
[6] *Mor.* Praef. 14.
[7] *Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 3; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 10. Gregory did not apply this threefold method with any scientific precision. In many cases he entirely neglected the historical meaning. In others, the allegorical and moral senses, or the moral and historical senses, were confused together. Gregory's object, however, was not scientific exegesis, but edification. Also his works were mostly composed in a hurry and under the pressure of business.

from his *Homilies on the Gospels*, that Gregory believed that the acts of Christ Himself contained a kernel of deeper meaning.[1] Besides their direct import, they were designed to be sometimes symbolical of the history of the Church, sometimes a figurative declaration of moral duties, sometimes a partial revelation of the glories to be hereafter. As Gregory wrote no commentary on the Acts of the Apostles or on any of the Epistles, I cannot say precisely what method he would have adopted in dealing with them. But if I may hazard a conjecture from his manner of quoting these books,[2] it seems probable that he would have used the allegorical method of interpretation much less frequently than he has done in his exposition of the rest of Scripture.

Gregory's exegesis has met with much adverse criticism. It has been pointed out that, according to his licence of interpretation, "there is nothing that might not be found in any book ever written." And there is truth in the remark. As interpreted by the allegorical method, any passage in Scripture may mean almost anything: every word is a revelation: and the expositor is inevitably tempted to substitute his own fancies for plain teaching, and to involve himself in a labyrinthine confusion of symbolical obscurities.[3] Gregory

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 2, § 1: "Miracula Domini et Salvatoris nostri sic accipienda sunt, ut et in veritate credantur facta, et tamen per significationem nobis aliquid innuant. Opera quippe eius et per potentiam aliud ostendunt, et per mysterium aliud loquuntur." *Ibid.* 17, § 11: "Ipsa facta eius praecepta sunt, quia dum aliquid tacitus facit, quid agere debeamus innotescit."

[2] Thus the Acts are quoted or referred to more than eighty times in the *Morals*, but only two passages are treated allegorically (Acts i. 15 *sqq.*, and Acts ix. 34. Acts x. 11–14 is not a case in point, as St. Peter's vision was obviously symbolical). The quotations from the Epistles—of which there are nearly 800 in the *Morals*—are almost always in their literal sense, though to some a figurative import is assigned which few would now recognize (*e.g.* Rom. xiv. 5; 1 Tim. ii. 15).

[3] The fanciful element in Gregory's exegesis is best illustrated in his explanations of numbers. Thus *three* is generally supposed to have some reference to the Trinity: *five* to the senses and hence to the whole world of sense: *seven* to the sevenfold gift of the Spirit, or to rest as denoted by the seventh day, or to this present life as denoted by the days of the week. The combination of numbers afforded greater scope for ingenuity of interpretation, and some curious examples will be found in *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5. But Gregory's explanations of words are often no less fanciful than his explanations of numbers; particularly as he is fond of attaching more than one meaning to the same word. He says, "In sacro eloquio cum quilibet unus sermo dicitur,

himself was aware of the dangers of the method. He found by experience that very different interpretations might be given of the same passage, and he was willing to regard as legitimate all that were in accordance with the faith of the Church. "In understanding Holy Scripture," he writes, "whatever is not opposed to a sound faith ought not to be rejected."[1] Nevertheless, he endeavoured to guard against the worst consequences of his method by laying down some practical rules of interpretation. Like Augustine before him, and Thomas Aquinas after, he urgently insisted that due regard must be paid to the historical, literal meaning of Scripture. "I most earnestly entreat every one who raises his mind to the spiritual meaning not to fail in reverence for the history."[2] He constantly warns his readers against excess of allegorizing, and says that he who persistently neglects the obvious sense in the attempt to discover a deeper, is apt to find in the end no sense at all.[3] His own practice he describes as follows: "First we lay the foundations in the history; then by pursuing a typical sense we erect an intellectual edifice to be a stronghold of faith; and, lastly, by the grace of moral instruction, we as it were paint the fabric with fair colours."[4] And in those passages of the *Magna Moralia*, which have been fully worked out, we observe that he has been most careful to develop what seemed to him to be the direct primary meaning

non semper unam eandemque rem significare credatur." Thus the words "sun," "lion," "ox," may be understood in a good or a bad sense (*Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 7, § 1; compare *Mor.* v. 41). Sometimes Gregory gives three meanings to one word (*e.g.* "somnus," *Mor.* v. 54), sometimes as many as five (*e.g.* "herba," *Mor.* xxix. 52). His explanations of the typical significance of Old Testament characters are equally uncertain (*e.g.* in *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 3, Isaac represents God, Jacob the Gentiles, and Esau the Jews; but in *Mor.* xxxv. 26 Isaac typifies the Jewish people, and Jacob Christ; elsewhere Isaac is a type of Christ). In giving his allegorical explanations, however, Gregory had no wish to dogmatize, but was ready to submit to the judgment of any who were better informed (*Mor.* xxx. 81). Yet his method has injuriously affected the value of his comments on the Bible, particularly on the New Testament. In the *Homilies on the Gospels* he has frequently missed the most important and suggestive part of the teaching, in his anxiety to pass to a mystical interpretation.

[1] *Epp.* iii. 62.

[2] *Mor.* i. 56; cf. *Hom. in Ev.* 40, § 1; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 7; ii. 3, § 18.

[3] *Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 4; *Mor.* xxi. 3; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 3, § 4.

[4] *Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 3.

of every part of the narrative.[1] Again, even in the allegorical interpretation itself, Gregory was anxious to exclude mere fancy and caprice. He ruled that every interpretation of the symbolical language of Scripture must be in harmony with Scripture itself, in its other parts, and with the recognized doctrines of the Church.[2] Any principle that was based solely on the unsupported allegorical explanation of a Biblical passage was open to the imputation of heresy. The Bible itself and the Fathers were to be the tests of the accuracy of an expositor.

It should, perhaps, be added that the allegorical method of Gregory was the method of his time. Only the theologians of the Antiochene school had emancipated themselves, to some extent, from the tradition. In the West allegory was the fashion, and a sober exegesis on a grammatico-historical basis was practically unknown. Before Gregory, Augustine had taught a fourfold sense of Scripture; and after him the doctors maintained a threefold (Paschasius), a fourfold (Aquinas), a sevenfold (Angelom of Luxeuil), an eightfold (Odo of Cluny), and even an infinite sense of Scripture (Scotus Erigena). Nor was this fondness for allegory confined to the theologians. The tedious work of Martianus Capella supplies us with a notable instance of its use in secular literature. And the immense popularity of this work and of the *Magna Moralia* during the Middle Ages, is an incontrovertible proof of the attractiveness of the method.

I will conclude this exposition of Gregory's teaching about Holy Scripture by referring to a practical caution on which he frequently insists. Just as Augustine had taught

[1] Occasionally, however, Gregory deliberately sets aside the literal sense, on the ground that the words as they stand are absurd or self-contradictory, or that they convey erroneous ideas (*Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 3; *Mor.* iv. Praef. 4). He is hampered all through his Commentary on Job by his inability to understand the poetical character of the book.

[2] *Mor.* xviii. 39. It cannot, I think, be shown that any important idea, moral or theological, was derived by Gregory solely, or even primarily, from an allegorical interpretation of a passage in Scripture. The doctrines which he did most to develop—purgatory, masses, saintly intercessions, etc.—are supported by references to visions, miracles, and to the plain passages of Scripture, but not by arguments derived from allegorical renderings. It is probable, however, that Gregory's anxiety to allegorize the words of Job resulted in his giving a greater prominence to the "deception-theory" in connexion with the Atonement, than it would otherwise have received.

that love of the Bible is the indispensable condition of understanding the Bible, so Gregory is never weary of repeating that God's Word appeals to character rather than to intellect. To gain and retain a knowledge of Scripture a man must have the spirit of Scripture: he learns according as he lives. "We hear the words of God if we act upon them."[1] Hence those alone can discern the mysteries who ardently desire to know more of God and to become more useful to their fellow-men. It is the light of love alone—the double love of God and of man—which illumines the shades of human dulness.[2] It is obedience to God's commands that gives insight. And Gregory adds that when those who are thus trained in habits of obedience and reverential study are called upon to expound the mysteries to others, a special measure of Divine assistance is given them for the sake of their hearers.[3] And, if in their explanations these teachers sometimes err, yet, inasmuch as their object is "the edification of charity," their words are still the words of God; since "throughout Scripture God speaks to us only for this purpose, that He may lead us to the love of Himself and of our neighbour."[4]

Section II.—The Doctrine of God.

Gregory's doctrine of God is derived almost entirely from Augustine, though the more strictly philosophical parts of Augustine's theory are barely touched. It seems as if Gregory failed to appreciate those fruitful ideas of his favourite master, which were afterwards developed by the Schoolmen, and which reappear in another form in Leibnitz and Bishop Butler. He had no love for philosophical abstractions, and no time for tracing out the subtleties of Neoplatonic dialectic. Hence he reproduces Augustine's conclusions in a superficial way, which appears to indicate that he never thoroughly mastered the process by which they were arrived at. Gregory's doctrine of God may therefore be described

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, § 20; *Mor.* i. 33; vi. 12; xv. 17; xxii. 8, 9.

[2] *Mor.* vi. 12: "Tenebras hebetudinis illustrat oculus amoris." *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 5, § 16; i. 7, § 8; *Hom. in Ev.* 23, § 1.

[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 2, § 1.

[4] *Ibid.* i. 10, § 14.

as an unscientific collection of Augustinian opinions; ill-digested and unarranged, yet good enough to satisfy the intellectual cravings of an unscientific age. The following is a summary of his teaching on this subject.

The Existence of God. We find in Gregory no formal attempt to prove the existence of God. Such demonstrations have their proper place in Scholastic philosophy: in the sixth century they were neither demanded nor supplied. Nevertheless, in his reading of the Latin Fathers, and particularly of Augustine, Gregory had come across ideas and arguments which he occasionally reproduces, though with little logical precision.

One of these was the old inference from the works of creation to the existence of a Creator. "The works of creation, when considered, are ways to the Creator. For when we see the things that are made we admire the power of the Maker." Thus, though we cannot as yet see God Himself, "we take a step towards the vision of Him when we contemplate Him in the wonderful things He has made." Through the objects which we view we get an intimation of the mystery that is concealed.[1]

Besides this "physico-theological argument," which Gregory could scarcely have overlooked—so persistently does it occur in the writings of the Latins from Tertullian downwards—Gregory uses another which was suggested to him by the so-called "ontological argument" of Augustine. This famous argument, in its detail, Gregory did not attempt to reproduce. This much, however, he did insist on—that the notion of God is bound up with the notion of man's spiritual nature; that self-analysis discloses the Deity; that the command, Γνῶθι σεαυτόν, is the surest road to God. His reasoning is somewhat as follows. Man, by the Fall, being banished from Paradise, "lost the light of the invisible, and gave himself entirely to the love of the visible." Unable any longer to apprehend the unseen realities of the spirit, he knew only such things as could be perceived through the senses. His very mind became carnal and gross, and could think only of what could be presented in bodily images, and take pleasure only in the visible and palpable. Hence the things of sense came to be regarded as

[1] *Mor.* xxvi. 17, 18; cf. *ibid.* v. 52.

the only realities, and God, who could not be perceived by the senses, was no longer feared or even believed in. In a word, man became absorbed in the outward world of sense, and the result was atheism.[1] Now, from this depth of materialism and irreligion man, says Gregory, is to be rescued by the method of introspection. Let him analyze his own constitution; let him meditate on the fact of self-consciousness; and by consideration of his own inward nature let him rise to the idea of God. Man consists of body and soul, visible and invisible, palpable and impalpable. Which of these is the true reality? Surely the soul; for the soul gives life to the body and enables it to discharge its functions: it sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, smells through the nostrils, tastes through the mouth, touches through all the members; and inasmuch as the body is entirely dependent on it, we may say that the soul enables the body to exist as a body. The soul, then, is higher in the scale of being than the body which is subject to it: the invisible triumphs over the visible, spirit over matter. Thus man discovers that there are other and higher existences than those which he sees and feels. The idea of the soul shatters his materialism. A way of escape is opened to him from the world of sense, and he enters the world of the spirit. And now let him take a further step. Let him thrust aside entirely all corporeal forms and images, and concentrate his attention on the soul itself. The soul, as he knows, gives life to the body; but the soul does not derive that life from itself. The life of the soul is, after all, only "vita vivificata" and flows into it from a Higher Source, "vita vivificans." As the body receives its life from the soul, so the soul receives its life from the Soul of Souls, the Source of Life, God. Thus as the corporeal existence depends on the spiritual existence, so the lower spiritual existence depends on the higher spiritual existence, and the being of the soul implies and involves the being of God.[2]

The same conclusion is reached if the imperfection of the soul be considered. The soul, being incorporate with the body, partakes of bodily defects and limitations. Its characteristic is mutability. But when the mind considers this mutability of the soul, it is irresistibly compelled to seek further until it can

[1] *Mor.* v. 61; xv. 52; xvi. 12.

[2] *Ibid.* xv. 52; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, §§ 8, 9.

rest in the idea of a "Substance of eternal unchangeableness, which is always the same, everywhere present, everywhere invisible, everywhere whole, everywhere incomprehensible; which is perceived by the longing mind without being seen, which is heard without uncertainty, which is taken in without motion, which is touched without body, which is held without place." This unchangeable "Substance" is God, and thus once more the consideration of the human soul opens the way to the Supreme.[1]

Such, in effect, is Gregory's argument for the existence of God, based on the idea of the spiritual nature of man. The reasoning is loose and logically faulty, but the general principle, that God's chief witness is the human spirit, is a sound one. Gregory calls his argument the "Stair of Thought"—Scala Considerationis. He says that the first step is taken when the soul collects itself within itself: the second step is taken when it considers what its nature is when so collected: the third step is taken when it rises above itself and subjects itself to the intent contemplation of its invisible Maker.[2]

The Comprehensibility of God. Augustine, in attempting to apprehend philosophically the idea of God, had been compelled by his reasoning to regard Him as indefinable Essence, of which we can only say what It is not. And this Platonic assertion of the impossibility of determining the nature of God is repeated by Gregory. The human mind, he says, cannot apprehend what the Divine Substance is: it can recognize only what It is not.[3] God, in the loftiness of His majesty, is hidden from our eyes; He only vouchsafes us some passing glimpses of Himself, to stimulate our faith and our desire for Him.[4] Hence man's knowledge of God is only relative and conditional. In making this point clear, Gregory distinguishes three kinds of knowledge.[5] The first is knowledge of God's Essence, the knowledge with which God knows Himself. The second is knowledge of God's Nature, of God revealed as fully as it is possible for the Infinite to be revealed to the finite. The third is knowledge of God by semblances, figures, and comprehensible images. The first kind of knowledge is called knowledge of the essence of

[1] *Mor.* v. 62.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, § 9.
[3] *Mor.* v. 62.
[4] *Mor.* xvi. 33.
[5] *Ibid.* x. 13–15; xviii. 88–93.

uncircumscribed Light; the second is knowledge of the brightness of the Light; the third is knowledge of the reflection of the Light. The first kind is possessed by God alone; the second, being the highest knowledge possible for created beings, is possessed by the angels and blessed spirits; the third belongs to the ordinary man. By the power of contemplation, indeed, man may rise above this lowest stage of knowing God through images, and may behold Him in His Nature, that is, as He manifests Himself directly to the finite understanding. But no man can ever get to know what God is in the reality of His Essence, that is, know Him as He knows Himself. Hence our knowledge of God can never be adequate to His actual Being. "For whatever we know of the brightness of His greatness is beneath Him; and the more we imagine that we comprehend His power, the further away are we from knowing Him. For although our mind be caught up on high, yet it is transcended by the immensity of His greatness. Of Whom we know something in part, when we feel that we are unable to know Him worthily."[1] Still, though our knowledge of God may be imperfect, it is trustworthy so far as it goes. We know God because He deigns to know us,[2] and reveals Himself to us, if not fully, yet truly. He does not "speak" to us, but yet He "whispers," in that, "though He does not fully unfold Himself, yet somewhat of Himself He does reveal to the mind of man."[3] Though we see not the Light itself, yet we may see the brightness of the Light, and that may be sufficient.

If human thought, then, cannot comprehend God, much less can human language express what He is. Gregory, like Augustine, doubts whether any positive affirmation concerning God can be literally true. "For flesh speaks of Spirit, the circumscribed spirit of the Uncircumscribed, the creature of the Creator, the temporal of the Eternal, the mutable of the Immutable, the mortal of the Quickener. Man is placed in darkness, and knows not the inward Light as it really is. And therefore, if he would speak of Eternity, he is like a blind man discoursing about the light."[4] Silence, then, is man's best acknowledgment

[1] *Mor.* xxvii. 9. Compare *ibid.* iv. 45; v. 52, 66; x. 13; xvi. 38; xvii. 39–41; xxiii. 39; xxiv. 12; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, §§ 30, 31.

[2] *Mor.* xxiv. 12.

[3] *Ibid.* v. 52, 66.

[4] *Ibid.* xxvii. 67.

of God's greatness.[1] "For almost everything that is said of God is unworthy, for the very reason that it is capable of being said."[2] Hence the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic expressions which occur in Scripture are not to be understood literally.[3] They are only figures—the rungs of a ladder, as it were, by which the mind may rise up to the contemplation of spiritual mysteries.[4] In the Bible God deigns to use our language, that we may apprehend somewhat of His doings.[5] As Gregory says very beautifully, "Our Heavenly Father talks stammeringly to us, His little children, that so He may make His meaning understood."[6]

The Nature and Attributes of God. In dealing with the Nature and Attributes of God, Gregory once more follows Augustine in taking for his starting-point the notion of Essentia, or Absolute Being. Of God alone can it be said that HE IS. Gregory, however, is careful to explain what he means by this phrase. He had no intention of asserting, like the pantheistic mystics of later times, that nothing except God has real existence. On the contrary, he admits that all created things have a being of a sort. But he maintains that it is only a secondary being, one which they neither owe to themselves nor maintain in themselves, but which they derive entirely from Another. The only primary, self-existent Being, the sole Origin of all the various forms of existence, is God. And in this sense it may truly be said that God alone IS. "It is one thing," writes Gregory, "to be, and it is another thing to be primarily; it is one thing to be mutably, and another thing to be immutably. For all things have being, but they have not primary being, because they do not subsist in themselves, and except they were maintained by the hand of a Governor, they could not be at all. All things subsist in Him by Whom they were created. So, too, the things that live do not owe their life to themselves, and the lifeless things which are moved are not

[1] *Mor.* ix. 19; xxvii. 74.

[2] *Ibid.* xx. 62.

[3] Gregory frequently comments on such expressions. See *e.g. Mor.* ii. 8-12, 18; iii. 4; v. 37, 76; ix. 12, 42, 43; x. 14; xi. 41, 54; xiv. 53; xvi. 47; xvii. 2; xix. 5, 7; xx. 63, 64; xxiii. 35; xxiv. 12; xxxii. 7, 9; xxxv. 4.

[4] *Ibid.* xx. 63.

[5] *Ibid.* iii. 4.

[6] *Ibid.* xix. 14.

brought into motion by their own impulse. But He moves all things, Who quickens some things into life, and preserves the things that are not quickened, arranging them in a wonderful order down to the lowest in the scale of being. For all things were made out of nothing, and their being would return into nothing, unless the Author of all things maintained and governed it. Hence all created things can neither subsist nor move of themselves. They subsist only in so far as they have obtained that they should be; they move only in so far as they are disposed by a hidden impulse."[1] God, then, is self-existent Being, the First Cause of all existence and life and motion. With Him alone is "verum esse."[2]

Now, this Divine Essentia, being the highest and most complete form of being, is simple. Therefore, says Gregory (still following Augustine), we cannot separate God's Attributes from His Nature, and regard them as something manifold and contingent which He has in addition to His Nature and distinct from it. On the contrary, the Attributes of God form a whole which is identical with the Essence of God. With Him, subject and predicate are one and the same thing. Or, as Gregory expresses it: "God is that which He hath. For He hath eternity, and yet He is Himself Eternity. He hath light, and yet He is Himself His own Light. He hath brightness, and yet He is Himself His own Brightness. And, therefore, in Him it is not one thing to be and another thing to have."[3] Thus, for example, we may say of a man that he is, and also that he is wise, and also that he is strong; but the strength of man is not identical with the wisdom of man, and neither the strength nor the wisdom is identical with his being. "But to the simple nature of Deity it is not one thing to be and another thing to be wise, nor one thing to be wise and another thing to be strong, for His strength is identically the same as His wisdom, and His wisdom is identically the same as his Essence."[4] Hence the so-called Attributes of God are but the human modes

[1] *Mor.* xvi. 45.

[2] Gregory speaks of God as "Causa causarum," "Vita viventium," "Ratio rationabilium creaturarum" (*Mor.* xxx. 17), and points out that since God alone is true Being, therefore man has being only in God and, to leave Him is to tend to not-being (*Mor.* xii. 9; xiii. 9; xiv. 22; xvii. 10, etc.).

[3] *Ibid.* xvi. 54.

[4] *Ibid.* xvii. 46; cf. xviii. 81.

of expressing the relation of the simple Essence of Deity to time and space, things and persons. But in the midst of all relations, God Himself remains one and self-identical.[1]

The Metaphysical Attributes of God are deduced from the notion of Simple Being. Thus, Gregory argues, if God is Supreme Being, He must be *Immutable*. "For He alone truly IS who alone unchangeably continues. Everything which is now in one way and now in another, is near to not-being. For it cannot continue in its state, and, since by lapse of time it is being changed from what it was, it in a manner approaches not-being."[2] But with God, to BE is to continue without change—neither ceasing to be what He was, nor beginning to be what He was not.[3] His Being is "essential," not "accidental"; and essential Being cannot suffer change.[4]

But in the next place, if God is immutable, He must necessarily also be *Eternal*. For simple unchangeable Being can have no past or future. It is one everlasting present, in which Time is swallowed up. Gregory here takes occasion to distinguish between the eternity of God and the eternity of angels and men. The latter eternity, he explains, is only a spurious kind of eternity. For although human and angelic existences have no end, they have, nevertheless, a beginning in time. But God, who is truly eternal, has neither beginning nor end, before or after. He simply IS. "Stretch thine eye into eternity, that thou mayest see God, either when He begins to be or how far He will continue. There is no boundary anywhere above, because He begins not to be; no boundary anywhere below, because he ceases not to be."[5]

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, § 10: "Omnipotens Deus, quia sibimetipsi dissimilis non est, ea virtute videt qua audit omnia, ea virtute creat qua iudicat creata. Eius ergo et videre simul omnia administrare est, et administrare conspicere. Nec alia cogitatione iustos adiuvat, atque alia iniustos damnat, sed una eademque vi naturae singularis sibi semper indissimilis dissimilia disponit . . . Omnipotens Deus in semetipso habet sine immutatione mutabilia disponere, sine diversitate sui diversa agere, sine cogitationum vicissitudine dissimilia formare. Longe ergo dissimiliter operatur dissimilia nunquam sibi dissimilis Deus, qui et ubique est, et ubique totus est."

[2] *Mor.* xviii. 82.

[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 20; cf. *Mor.* v. 63.

[4] *Mor.* xviii. 81: "Incommutabiliter vivit quia non ex accidenti sed essentialiter vivit."

[5] *Ibid.* xxvii. 10. Cf. *Mor.* ix. 72: "Dies quoque et anni hominis a diebus et annis discrepant aeternitatis, quia vitam nostram, quae tempore incipitur,

Once more, if Simple Being is unsusceptible of limitation in point of time, so also it can suffer no limitation in respect of space. God cannot fall under either of the categories. Space and time exist through Him, but not for Him; since no bounds can be set to essential Being. "Within Him all things are bound together, but He is extended round all things without space, and is spread abroad without place."[1] From this it follows that God is *Omnipresent*. "He Himself, one and the same, abides within all things and without all things, above all things and below all things. He is above in virtue of His power, and below in virtue of His upholding. He is without by His immensity, and within by His subtlety. He rules from on high; He contains from below. He encompasses without; He penetrates within. He does not abide by one part above and by another part below, or by one part without and by another part within; but one and the same, and wholly everywhere, He sustains in ruling and rules in sustaining, penetrates in encompassing and encompasses in penetrating. Whence He rules from above, thence he sustains from below, and whence He enfolds from without, thence He fills from within. He rules from above without disquietude, and sustains from below without effort. He penetrates without attenuation, and encompasses without expansion. So He is both high and low without place, wide without breadth, subtle without rarity."[2]

Further, inasmuch as God is the Author and Sustainer of every kind of existence, the Cause of all motion and the Giver of all life, it is clear that nothing can happen without His disposition. Wholly present at all times in every part of creation, He sustains and rules it all, even in its minutest details, with absolute power.[3] Hence God is *Omnipotent*.[4] And

tempore finitur, dum intra sinus sui latitudinem format, aeternitas devorat. Cuius nimirum immensitas, quia ultra citraque super nos tenditur, sine inchoatione et termino eius aeternum esse dilatatur; eique nec transacta praetereunt, nec adhuc ventura, quasi quae non appareant, desunt, quia is qui semper esse habet, cuncta sibi praesentia conspicit; cumque aspiciendo post et ante non tenditur, nulla intuitus mutatione variatur." Cf. *Mor.* ii. 34; xvi. 55; xxiii. 35.

[1] *Mor.* xxvii. 10.

[2] *Ibid.* ii. 20; cf. xvi. 38; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 16; ii. 5, § 11.

[3] *Mor.* xxvii. 35.

[4] *Mor.* xvi. 12.

again, inasmuch as He is eternally present in all things, penetrating and encompassing them, it is clear that there is nothing of which He can be ignorant. "For the more unchangeably shines the eternal Light, which is God, the more piercingly does It see. And It is neither ignorant of what is hid, because It penetrates all things; nor does It forget what It has penetrated, because It endures unchangeable."[1] Thus God is also *Omniscient*. Nothing that exists can escape Him, for, as Augustine had already pointed out, God does not see things because they exist, but things exist simply and solely because God sees them.[2] Omnipotence and omniscience, then, must both be predicated of Simple Being, which is God. Though here again Gregory is careful to remind us that might and wisdom cannot be separated from God's Nature as contingent phenomena, since they are each of them identical with His Essence, which is Wisdom and Might. "What wonder if we call the Maker of the wise wise, whom we know to be Wisdom Itself? Or what wonder if He be called mighty, whom every one knows to be Mightiness Itself?"[3]

With the Moral Attributes of God Gregory deals less fully. He accepts Augustine's identification of the Summum Esse with Summum Bonum, teaching that just as all the forms of existence are derived from the former, so all the forms of goodness spring from the latter. This Supreme Goodness is one and unchangeable. To men, indeed, God may appear to vary. At one time He seems harsh, at another time merciful. But this is an illusion produced by human mutability. Only in the thought of our hearts does God change. He Himself remains constant like the sunlight; for the same sunlight appears harsh to weak eyes, but to sound eyes soft and gentle.[4] Hence all moral predicates are properly inapplicable to God. To speak of Him, for instance, as angry or compassionate is to apply terms derived from purely human qualities to One in whom these qualities do not exist. At best such words have only a relative meaning. They are steps by which we may mount up to the unchangeable God, and "see

[1] *Mor.* xxv. 11; cf. xvii. 2.

[2] *Ibid.* xx. 63: "Nam et quaeque sunt, non in aeternitate eius ideo videntur quia sunt, sed ideo sunt quia videntur."

[3] *Ibid.* ix. 4.

[4] *Ibid.* xx. 64; cf. v. 37; xxxii. 9.

One showing jealousy without jealousy, One wroth without anger, One repentant without sorrow or repentance, One full of commiseration without heart of pity, foreknowing without foresight."[1] In beneficence and severity, in justice and mercy, God is one and the same, and these predicates express our estimate of and relation to Him, rather than attributes existing in Himself.

The Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity in its most essential features had been settled by the controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries, and Gregory does little more than allude to it as one of the established articles of the Christian faith. He repeats the orthodox proposition of the Three Persons and the One Substance, alleging in proof of the doctrine the case of Abraham, who was visited by three persons, but saluted only one.[2] He further teaches that the Divine Substance of the Trinity is incapable of partition or change, diminution or increase.[3] In respect of the relation of the Three Persons to one another, Gregory says: "Our Lord asserts that He shows plainly of the Father, because, through the appearance of His majesty that was then manifested, He shows both how He springs from the Father being yet equal with Him, and how the Spirit of both proceeds coeternal with both. For we shall then see clearly how That which is by origin is not subsequent to That from which It springs, and how He who is produced by procession is not preceded by Those from whom He proceeds. We shall then see clearly both how the One is divisibly Three and the Three are indivisibly One."[4] Thus the consubstantiality, coeternity, and coequality of the Three Persons are maintained. As we have already noticed, Gregory teaches that the doctrine of the Trinity is to be found not only in the New Testament but also in the Old,[5] though he admits that the majority of the Jews were in ignorance of it.[6] He also adopts Augustine's view that the Divine operations of Creation and of Providence are to be attributed, not solely to one or other of the Three Persons,

[1] *Mor.* xx. 63.

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 17, § 3; *Epp.* ii. 50: "Ille quippe in tribus angelis unum salutans Trinitatis subsistentias unius substantiae esse declaravit."

[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 9, § 9.

[4] *Mor.* xxx. 17; cf. *Hom. in Ev.* 24, § 4.

[5] *Mor.* xxix. 70; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, §§ 4, 7; ii. 9, § 11.

[6] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 9.

but to the Triune God.[1] At the same time, his statements respecting the Personality of the Son and the Spirit are clear. His doctrine, moreover, is entirely free from the taint of the older subordinationism.

The Work of God in Creation. In dealing with the work of God in Creation—the wonder and beauty of which he eloquently describes[2]—Gregory explicitly rejects the dualistic theory of the Manichaeans,[3] and maintains the orthodox doctrine of the creation of all things by God out of nothing.[4] The precise meaning of Nihil, however, he makes no attempt to define. In criticizing the Mosaic account he objects to the interpretation which would postulate a series of new creations on successive days.[5] He regards the first chapter of Genesis rather as the account of the gradual shaping of formless matter, which was itself created by God, first and once for all, out of nothing, by

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 9, § 9. Yet Gregory also refers to the special agency of the Word in Creation (*Mor.* ix. 75).

[2] See *e.g. Mor.* vi. 18.

[3] *Mor.* xxxii. 17.

[4] *Ibid.* iv. 8; v. 63; xvi. 45.

[5] *Ibid.* xxxii. 16: "Rerum quippe substantia simul creata est, sed simul species formata non est, et quod simul exstitit per substantiam materiae non simul apparuit per speciem formae. Cum enim simul factum coelum terraque describitur, simul spiritalia atque corporalia, simul quidquid de coelo oritur, simul factum quidquid de terra producitur indicatur. Sol quippe, luna et sidera quarto die in coelo facta perhibentur, sed quod quarto die processit in specie primo die in coeli substantia exstitit per conditionem. Primo die creata terra dicitur, et tertio arbusta condita, et cuncta terrae virentia describuntur; sed hoc quod die tertio se in specie protulit, nimirum primo die in ipsa de qua ortum est terrae substantia conditum fuit. Hinc est quod Moyses distincte per dies singulos condita omnia retulit, et tamen simul omnia creata subjunxit, dicens: *Istae sunt generationes coeli et terrae, quando creatae sunt in die quo fecit Dominus coelum et terram, et omne virgultum agri, antequam oriretur in terra, omnemque herbam regionis.* Qui enim diversis diebus creatum coelum et terram, virgultum herbamque narraverat, nunc uno die facta manifestat, ut liquido ostenderet quod creatura omnis simul per substantiam exstitit, quamvis non simul per speciem processit. Hinc illic quoque scriptum est: *Creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam, ad imaginem Dei creavit illum, masculum et feminam fecit eos.* Necdum enim Eva facta describitur, et iam homo masculus et femina perhibetur. Sed quia ex Adae latere procul dubio femina erat processura, in illo iam computatur per substantiam a quo fuerat producenda per formam. Considerare tamen haec et in minimis possumus, ut ex minimis majora pensemus. Herba namque cum creatur, necdum in illa fructus, necdum fructus sui semen ostenditur. Inest vero ei etiam cum non apparet fructus et semen, quia nimirum simul sunt in radicis substantia quae non simul prodeunt per temporis incrementa."

the fiat of His will. As he expresses it, "the substance of things" was created at once; but the "outward form" was not created at once. All things, so far as concerned their material substance, came into existence at one and the same time; but they received their several shapes and forms at different times. Thus, *in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, that is, in substance; but the forms were not produced simultaneously; for the sun, moon, and stars appeared on the fourth day, and the grass and trees on the third. Similarly, it is written: *God created man in His own image . . . male and female created He them*, although Eve was not yet made; which proves that the substance of man and woman was created at once, though their respective forms were developed at different times. Hence Gregory distinguishes between the original creation of matter, in which all things exist potentially, just as the fruit and seed exist potentially in the root of a plant; and the gradual evolution of this matter into the present world through successive periods of time. Gregory, however, does not explain what he understands by the Mosaic "days." Probably he interpreted the term merely in the sense of an indefinite space of time; though he may have followed Augustine in regarding the word merely as a symbol of the Divine order and arrangement without signifying strictly succession in time.[1]

The Work of God in Preservation. According to Gregory, the work of God in Creation is continued in His work of Preservation. For all things being created out of nothing, tend of their own nature to pass again into nothing, and are only kept in their state by the continuous intervention of the Creator. Unless God were every instant present in His universe, the world would cease to exist. For the world is not a machine which will go without its maker, or a building which subsists when the architect has withdrawn. It exists only in God, and if deprived of His sustaining power would crumble into nothing.[2] Hence Gregory emphasizes the idea of Divine

[1] *Mor.* ii. 35: "Cum Scriptura sacra temporaliter editis loquitur, dignum est ut verbis temporalibus utatur, quatenus condescendendo levet; et dum de aeternitate aliquid temporaliter narrat, assuetos temporalibus sensim ad aeterna trajiciat; seque bene nostris mentibus aeternitas incognita, dum verbis cognitis blanditur, infundat."

[2] *Ibid.* xvi. 45.

Providence. God works continuously in every part of His creation, penetrating, upholding, and disposing all things, from the least to the greatest; wholly present in every part, and, while Himself remaining unmoved, ordering all things by the power of His Nature.[1] As He is sole Creator, so also is He sole Governor, needing no assistance from any other; and as He created all things well, so also does He govern all things well, while He never forsakes the creation which He called into existence.[2]

The Relation of God to Evil. The old difficulty about the metaphysical nature and origin of evil, Gregory touches very slightly. Here, as usual, he follows in the steps of Augustine, reiterating his opinions as to the unsubstantiality of evil and its subservience to the will of God, though somewhat confusedly. His statements may be summarized as follows. Evil has not, as the Manichaeans teach, a self-subsistent being of its own. For all true existence is derived from God, and is good. Evil, then, is the defect of existence, of good; it is privation, unsubstantiality, nothingness. "Every sin," says Gregory, "is without foundation because it has no subsistence in its own nature. For evil is without substance. But however it exists, it is always bound up in the nature of the good."[3] How, then, can it be said of God that He "creates" evil? Gregory explains that, though God is not the Author of sin, yet He is the Author of nature, which, though created good, falls of itself into sin.[4] Thus, in a negative sense, He may be held responsible for evil, in that, although He does not originate it, He yet permits the human will to originate it and to persist in it. Again, in another and more positive sense God may be said to "create" evil, in that He uses things good in themselves for the punishment of transgressors. Just as poison in itself is a good thing

[1] *Mor.* xxv. 33: "Sic intenduntur divina iudicia super unam animam, sicut super unam urbem; sic super unam urbem, sicut super unam gentem; sic super unam gentem, sicut super universam generis humani multitudinem; quia et sic intendit Dominus singulis ac si vacet a cunctis; et sic simul intendit omnibus ac si vacet a singulis. Qui enim omnia administrando implet, regit implendo; nec universis deest, cum disponit unum; nec uni deest, cum disponit universos, cuncta scilicet naturae suae potentia quietus operatur." Cf. *Mor.* xxvii. 35.

[2] *Ibid.* xxiv. 46.

[3] *Ibid.* xxvi. 68.

[4] *Ibid.* xxix. 55.

and life to the serpent, yet for man is death; so God turns things that are absolutely good into relative evils for the punishment of the wicked.[1] Thus God is related to evil in two ways—the evil of guilt He permits but does not cause; the evil of punishment He causes for His own good purposes.

But Gregory teaches, like Augustine, that every kind of evil is overruled for good and made subject to the law of God. God's will cannot be thwarted; it is accomplished even through what appears to be contrary to it. Man may submit to God, or he may resist Him, but in either case God's will is done.[2] The universe contains many discordant elements, but they are made to subserve the purposes of goodness and of beauty; so that evil constitutes but the dark background of God's perfect picture, throwing the good into relief. Hell and damnation itself cannot deform the beauty of the sum of things for those who have power to view them at a glance.[3] The end of all is attained by the interaction of opposing forces under the control of an all-wise and omnipotent God.[4]

Section III.—The Doctrine of Christ.

(1) *The Incarnation.*

On the subject of the Incarnation there was, at the close of the sixth century, no great controversy to engage Gregory's attention. The subtle disputes as to the mode in which the Divine and human elements were united in the historical Christ, were still for the moment. The Monophysites had been condemned at the Council of Chalcedon, and, though strong in the East, they had in the West but few adherents. The Monothelete heresy and the later Adoptian controversies had not yet been ventilated. The consequence was that Gregory had no great inducement to investigate for himself the doctrine

[1] *Mor.* iii. 15.

[2] *Ibid.* vi. 28–33; ix. 23; xi. 3; xv. 37; xvi. 46, 47; xxxiii. 28.

[3] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 29: "Ita enim tunc pulchra erit universitas, dum et gehenna iuste cruciat impios, et aeterna felicitas iuste remunerat pios. Sicut enim niger color in pictura substernitur, ut superiectus albus vel rubeus pulchrior ostendatur, ita tunc etiam malos bene ordinans Deus, feliciora exhibet gaudia beatorum, ostensis ante eorum oculos suppliciis reproborum."

[4] *Ibid.* xvii. 16; cf. ii. 38.

of the Incarnation, or to speculate deeply about it. He was content to repeat the Chalcedonian formulas, and, when hard pressed for an explanation, to take refuge in his favourite doctrine of human incapacity for apprehending the deep secrets of God.[1] Hence his teaching on this subject as a whole is not illuminating; though on one or two points his opinions are worthy of notice.

The orthodox doctrine of the association of Two Natures in One Person is, of course, maintained by Gregory. Jesus Christ, he says, was at once God and Man. (*a*) He is God, not merely by adoption as Nestorius taught, not merely in name as the saints might be called gods, but essentially, in His proper nature.[2] As God, He is the Second Person of the Trinity, the Only-begotten Son of the Father—begotten not in time, but timelessly, and therefore eternal; always begotten, and never in process of being begotten, and therefore perfect.[3] Save for His generation, He is not less than the Father, but remains consubstantial, coeternal, and coequal with Him, whose Virtue and Wisdom He is.[4] He is likewise consubstantial, coeternal, and coequal with the Spirit.[5] (*b*) Jesus Christ, again, was Man, with a veritable human nature—a rational soul and animal body (*corpus animale*),[6] subject to hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, and death.[7] As Man He shared the nature of humanity, although He did not participate in the

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 7, § 3: "Incarnationis mysterium humanus oculus penetrare non sufficit. Investigari etenim nullatenus potest quomodo corporatur Verbum, quomodo summus et vivificator Spiritus intra uterum matris animatur, quomodo is qui initium non habet, et existit et concipitur." Cf. *ibid.* 22, § 8; 25, § 6.

[2] *Mor.* xviii. 85; cf. *ibid.* i. 26; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 3; *Epp.* xi. 52.

[3] *Mor.* xxix. 1: "Dominus Deus noster Iesus Christus in eo quod virtus et sapientia Dei est, de Patre ante tempora natus est; vel potius quia nec coepit nasci, nec desiit, dicamus verius semper natus. Non autem possumus dicere semper nascitur, ne imperfectus videatur. At vero ut aeternus designari valeat et perfectus, *semper* dicamus et *natus*, quatenus et *natus* ad perfectionem pertineat, et *semper* ad aeternitatem, ut quocunque modo illa essentia sine tempore temporali valeat designari sermone; quamvis hoc ipso quod perfectum dicimus, multum ab illius veritatis expressione deviamus, quia quod factum non est non potest dici perfectum." Cf. *ibid.* xxiii. 35; xxix. 2.

[4] *Hom. in Ev.* 25, § 6.

[5] *Ibid.* 30, § 5; 26, § 2.

[6] *Mor.* xxxi. 42; xxxiii. 32; *Epp.* xi. 52.

[7] *Mor.* xxx. 67; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 1, § 15.

sin of humanity.[1] But, because He was sinless, He differed from ordinary men in the manner both of His birth and of His death. For He was born miraculously, without taint of original sin, and He died, not as the penalty for sin, but of His own free will.[2] Further, He differed from ordinary men in the manner of His resurrection, not being raised up like others, but raising Himself by His own Divine power.[3] Nevertheless, though He was unlike us in these particulars, yet in the essential verity of His earthly nature, Jesus was truly Man.

These two elements, the Divine and the Human, converged in the single Person of the God-Man. For the Incarnate Son is a unity, not of two Persons, but of two Natures. "Though He is one thing (*aliud*) from the Father, and another thing (*aliud*) from the Virgin, yet He is not one Person (*alius*) from the Father, and another Person (*alius*) from the Virgin. But the same Person is at once eternal from the Father and a temporal being from His mother. The same who made is the same who was made. The same, *fairer than the children of men*, in respect of His Divinity, is the same of whom it is written: *He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him* in respect of His humanity. The same before all ages from the Father without mother, and the same at the end of the ages from His mother without father. The same the temple and the same the Builder of the temple. The same the Maker of the work, and the same the Work of the Maker. So He remains One Person, from and in both Natures, being neither confused by the conjunction of Natures, nor doubled by their distinction."[4] These two Natures, Gregory explains, are, unconfusedly yet inseparably, united in such manner, that while each retains its essential properties unimpaired, each by means of its union with the other undergoes a certain modification. The Human Nature is rendered more glorious, and made to shine with miracles, in virtue of the Godhead; the Divine Nature is tempered to our vision, and made capable of suffering by means of the humanity.[5]

[1] *Mor.* xvii. 46; xviii. 84; xxiv. 2; xxvii. 3; xxx. 66; [Greg.] *Super Cant. Canticorum* v. 15.

[2] *Mor.* xxiv. 3; *Hom. in Ev.* 22, § 4.

[3] *Mor.* xxiv. 3.

[4] *Ibid.* xviii. 85; cf. *Hom. in Ev.* 38, § 3.

[5] Gregory inaccurately compares the union of the two Natures to the

Thus both Natures, inseparable from each other, unconfused with each other, but modified by each other, are associated in the unity of a single Person—"in the form of God equal to the Father, but in the form of a servant less than the Father, less giving also than Himself"[1]; as God together with the Father giving all things, as Man receiving from the Father among all things[2]; embracing the world by the power of His Divinity, confined within a Virgin's womb by the substance of His humanity[3]; at once teaching the angels in heaven, and questioning the doctors on earth[4]; immortal yet mortal,[5] invisible yet visible,[6] incomprehensible yet comprehensible,[7] supreme above all men yet a man among others:[8] "One in both Natures, since He who was God before all ages was made man in the end of the ages."[9]

This union was effected by the Son of God Himself, who deigned to create for Himself within the Virgin's womb a human body, to which He was joined through the mediation of a human soul,[10] to the end that He, "being impassible, might suffer passion; being immortal, might suffer death; being

"mixture" of gold and silver in electrum. *Mor.* xxviii. 5: "Electrum quippe ex auri argentique metallo miscetur, in qua permistione argentum quippe clarius redditur, sed tamen fulgor auri temperatur. Quid ergo in electro nisi mediator Dei et hominum demonstratur? Qui dum semetipsum nobis ex divina atque humana natura composuit, et humanam per deitatem clariorem reddidit, et divinam per humanitatem nostris aspectibus temperavit. Quia enim virtute divinitatis eius tot miraculis humanitas fulsit, ex auro crevit argentum; et quod per carnem Deus cognosci potuit, quodque per carnem tot adversa toleravit, quasi ex argento temperatum est aurum." Cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 14. Yet he maintains that the two elements are not confused. *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 25: "In Redemptore autem nostro utraque natura, id est divinitatis et humanitatis, inconfuse ac inseparabiliter unita sibimet atque coniuncta est, ut et per humanitatem divinitatis eius claritas nostris posset oculis temperari, et per divinitatem humana in eo natura claresceret, atque exaltata fulgorem ultra hoc quod creata fuerat haberet."

[1] *Mor.* xxx. 66. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 60. [3] *Ibid.* xxx. 73.
[4] *Hom. in. Ezech.* i. 2, § 3. [5] *Ibid.* i. 7, § 10.
[6] *Ibid.* ii. 1, § 15.
[7] *Mor.* xvii. 39; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 1, § 4.
[8] *Hom. in Ev.* 25, § 2. [9] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 24.
[10] *Mor.* xxxiii. 32: "Sapientia domum sibi condidit, cum unigenitus Dei filius in semetipso intra uterum Virginis, mediante anima, humanum sibi corpus creavit. Sic quippe corpus Unigeniti domus Dei dicitur, sicut etiam templum vocatur; ita vero, ut unus idemque Dei atque hominis filius ipse sit qui inhabitat, ipse qui inhabitatur." Cf. *Mor.* xxxi. 42: "Carnem divinitas anima mediante suscepit."

eternal before all ages, might become a temporal being in the end of the ages."[1]

Of the *exinanitio* Gregory speaks as follows: "His taking the humility of the flesh did not impair His sovereignty. For in order that He might both take upon Him that which He was to save, yet not undergo alteration in that which He had, He neither lessened the Divine by the human nor swallowed up the human in the Divine. For although Paul saith, *Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant;* yet to Him it is 'emptying Himself' to manifest Himself as visible from the greatness of His invisible being; so that the form of a servant should be the covering of That which without limitation penetrates all things by virtue of Godhead."[2] Elsewhere Gregory says: "We say that the Word was made flesh, not by losing what He was, but by taking what He was not. For in the mystery of His Incarnation, the Only-begotten increased what was ours, but diminished not what was His."[3] Thus, according to Gregory, the *exinanitio* meant that the Son of God took to Himself the weakness of man, but did not abandon the strength of God. He retained all His attributes in His Divine functions in the Holy Trinity and in His cosmic functions in the universe, yet within the sphere of the Incarnation He relinquished the exercise of some of them in order to manifest Himself to finite minds. Thus, for example, He surrendered His invisibility. For man was incapable of gazing on the splendours of Godhead, and therefore the Son of God tempered His Divine glory to human gaze by veiling it under the form of humanity. But although, according to Gregory's kenotic doctrine, a partial surrender of the exercise of Divine attributes is postulated within the sphere of the Incarnation, yet this surrender is at the same time only partial. As will be shown immediately, certain attributes—such, for instance, as His omniscience—are not surrendered at all, or, at least, are surrendered only in semblance. And, precisely to the extent of this, the *exinanitio* is apparent rather than real, and the humanity of Christ also becomes unreal. Here Gregory appears to be in fault, and

[1] *Mor.* xviii. 85.

[2] *Mor.* ii. 42.

[3] *Epp.* xi. 52.

therefore his opinions must, in fairness, be stated somewhat at length.

The question before us is—How far does Gregory teach that Christ was perfectly Man? To what extent is He assumed to have refrained from the exercise of His Divine attributes within the sphere of the Incarnation? Was He human in every respect save sin, *i.e.* with all the sinless affections, limitations, and infirmities of humanity, capable of ignorance, fear, distress, moral struggle, as well as bodily pain and weakness? or was He really human only in certain respects, and in the rest human only in appearance? An examination of such passages in Gregory's works as bear upon this question has led me to the conclusion that, in the opinion of this Father, the humanity of Christ, in the mental and moral sphere, was merely exhibitive, and that only so far as concerns the body and its affections was He really perfect man. It is true that Gregory lays down the general principle that in the Incarnate Christ "the human was not swallowed up in the Divine." But when he comes to particulars, and attempts to elucidate difficulties concerning the knowledge of Jesus, His mental sufferings and His temptation, he loses sight of his general principle, and seems to merge in the Godhead all real human limitations. Indeed, in respect of the ignorance of Christ, Gregory asserts the doketic view without the slightest ambiguity. His statements regarding Christ's mental anguish and His temptation are less explicit, but their general tenour seems to be to the same effect.

(i.) *The Knowledge of Christ.* Here Gregory will not tolerate any human limitations. He conceived that the union of the Divine and human Natures in the Person of Jesus was so intimate that the human mind was completely illumined by the Word, and human ignorance was lost in Divine omniscience. Christ, he says, knew all things; but sometimes "He took our ignorance upon Him in His mode of speech" to teach us a lesson. Therefore He sometimes spoke as though with our doubts, as when He said: *When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?*[1] But His ignorance was only an

[1] *Mor.* i. 31: "Cuncta sciens, sed in locutione sua nostram ignorantiam suscipiens, atque dum suscipit docens, nonnunquam quasi ex nostra dubitatione loquitur sicut dicit: *Filius hominis veniens, putas, invenict fidem super terram?*"

appearance voluntarily assumed. In reality the God-Man was omniscient. Gregory's attention had been drawn to this subject by a question of some Agnoetae, and a treatise composed by Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria, in confutation of these so-called heretics. Gregory approved the arguments of Eulogius, and wrote him a letter in which he expounded his own opinion at some length and with much ingenuity.[1] "Concerning what is written, that the day and the hour neither the Son nor the angels know, you have rightly perceived that this must most certainly be referred not to the Son in respect of Himself as the Head, but in respect of His Body which we are. With regard to which matter the blessed Augustine in many places adopts this sense. He mentions also another thing which may be understood of the Son, namely, that Almighty God sometimes speaks in a human manner, even as He says to Abraham, *Now I know that thou fearest God.* It was not that God then came to know that He was feared, but that He then made Abraham know that he feared God. For as we speak of 'a happy day,' not meaning that the day itself is happy, but that it makes us happy, so also the Almighty Son says that He does not know the day which He causes us not to know—not that He Himself does not know it, but that He does not allow it to be known. Whence also the Father alone is said to know it, because the Son, who is consubstantial with Him, has His knowledge of what the angels are ignorant of, from His Divine nature, whereby He is above the angels. Therefore the passage may more nicely be understood thus; that the Only-begotten, being incarnate and made for us perfect man, knew, indeed, in the Nature of His humanity, the day and hour of the judgment, but yet knew it not from the Nature of His humanity. What, therefore, He knew in it He knew not from it, because God, made Man, knew the day and hour of the judgment through the power of His Divinity. . . . Thus the

Cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 3: "Iuxta rationis usum doctrinae sermo non suppetit nisi in aetate perfecta. Unde et ipse Dominus anno duodecimo aetatis suae in medio doctorum in templo sedens, non docens sed interrogans voluit inveniri. Ut enim non auderent homines in infirma aetate praedicare, ille anno duodecimo aetatis suae interrogare homines est dignatus in terra, qui per divinitatem suam semper angelos docet in coelo."

[1] *Epp.* x. 21. Compare also [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* iii. 1, 14.

knowledge which He had not of the nature of His humanity, whereby He was with the angels a creature, this He denied that He had with the angels who are creatures. That day and hour, then, He knows as God and Man, but for this reason—that God is Man. . . . For how can any one who confesses that the Wisdom of God Itself was incarnate, yet possibly say that there is anything of which the Wisdom of God is ignorant? . . . With respect to the passage in which He says to the women about Lazarus, *Where have ye laid him?* I felt exactly as you did, that if they say that the Lord did not know where Lazarus was buried, and for that reason inquired, they will undoubtedly be compelled to acknowledge that the Lord did not know in what places Adam and Eve had hid themselves after their sin, when He said in Paradise, *Adam, where art thou?* or when Here buked Cain, saying, *Where is Abel thy brother?* . . . But on this passage Severian of Gabala speaks differently, saying that the Lord spoke thus to the women, as it were by way of rebuke, in that He inquired where they had laid the dead Lazarus; as if, with plain reference to the sin of Eve, He had said, 'I placed the man in Paradise, but you have placed him in the sepulchre.'" Gregory adds that he has been unable to reply to the suggestion of the deacon Anatolius, who had hazarded the view that "just as He who is immortal vouchsafed to die that He might deliver us from death, and as He who is eternal before all time willed to subject Himself to time-conditions, so the Wisdom of God might have vouchsafed to take upon Himself our ignorance to deliver us from ignorance." But though this opinion, now generally adopted, was not confuted by the Pope, it clearly did not meet with his approval. Gregory refused absolutely to believe in any real ignorance of Jesus. While insisting on the closeness of the union of the two Natures, he lost sight of the distinction between the Natures and their attributes, and in effect confused the Divine Word with the human mind. Hence he was compelled to seek out far-fetched explanations of the plain words of Scripture. When Jesus asks a question or implies a doubt, He is said to be merely employing a form of speech calculated to convey a lesson or reproof to His hearers. When, in a given case, Jesus expressly asserts His ignorance, His asseveration is accounted for in an artificial manner. In a word, so far as concerns the

omniscience of the Son of God, there was, according to Gregory's teaching, no *exinanitio* whatsoever at the Incarnation.

(ii.) *The Mental Sufferings of Christ.* Gregory's views on this subject are found in the two following passages. "If at any time He is said to be troubled and to have groaned in spirit, He did Himself, in His Divine Nature, ordain how much He should in His human Nature be troubled, immutably presiding over all things, yet showing Himself mutable in satisfying human frailty (*in satisfactione infirmitatis*). And thus remaining tranquil in Himself, He ordained whatever He did, even with a troubled spirit, for the setting forth of that human Nature which He had taken upon Himself (*pro ostendenda humanitate quam susceperat*)."[1] Again, in reference to our Lord's agonized words in Gethsemane, Gregory writes: "It is common with righteous men, wherein they feel themselves sure and firm, to urge something as if with doubt and to put the words of the weak into their own mouth. And then again, by a strong sentence, they gainsay utterly him who halts in doubtfulness. Thus in that which they seem to put forth doubtfully they in some degree condescend to the weak; while by delivering a sure sentence they draw the doubtful minds of the weak on to firm ground. And in doing this they are following the example of our Head. For our Lord, when He was near His Passion, took up the voice of the weak in Himself, saying, *O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me;* and that He might remove their fear He took it in Himself. And again showing by obedience the force of strength He says, *Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt;* that when what we dread threatens us, we should in weakness so pray that it may not be, that yet in strength we are ready for the will of the Creator to be done even in opposition to our own will. After this pattern, then, the words of weakness are sometimes with propriety adopted by the strong, that afterwards by their strong preachings the hearts of the weak may the more be strengthened."[2]

The meaning of the first of these passages is not quite clear. Gregory maintains, indeed, that the mental distress and perturbation of Christ was voluntary. But in what sense voluntary? Did Gregory mean to say that the soul-trouble of our

[1] *Mor.* iii. 30. [2] *Ibid.* xii. 16.

Lord was voluntary in the sense that He permitted Himself to be troubled, not using His Divine power to prevent such trouble, just as His death was voluntary because He did not use His power to hinder those who slew Him? If this was Gregory's meaning, there is nothing to which exception can be taken. But his language seems to indicate another kind of voluntariness. He seems to say, not that Christ permitted His soul to be troubled, but that He positively brought on Himself the trouble, took on Himself the affection of human infirmity by a deliberate act of will; the design of the act of self-troubling being to manifest to the world His humanity. He Himself remained throughout tranquil, by reason of His Godhead, and out of His Divine peace He ordained the precise amount of suffering which His manhood must exhibit, in order to cause men to believe in the Incarnation. Such seems to be the meaning of the first passage quoted; and this interpretation appears to be borne out by the wording of the second passage, where Jesus is represented as using expressions of weakness deliberately and of set purpose for the sake of setting an example. But this voluntary assumption of trouble is compatible neither with the reign of natural law in Christ nor with the reality of His human Nature. His soul-trouble was not the trouble of ordinary men. It was not genuine human experience, but a display for the sake of example or doctrine. And therefore, providing that this exposition of Gregory's doctrine is correct, we have here once more to charge him with an inadequate conception of the perfection of our Lord's humanity, and an insufficient recognition of the claims of the kenosis.

(iii.) *The Temptation of Christ.* In discussing this question, Gregory distinguishes three stages or moments in the process of temptation—suggestion, pleasure, consent. The suggestion comes from the devil and is in itself no sin, though it often leads to sin. Gregory calls it "the seed of sin." The pleasure comes through the flesh, and with it sin properly has its beginning. Gregory calls it "the nutriment of sin." The consent is of the spirit and perfects the sin. It is called "the completion of sin." Such is the process of temptation in the case of ordinary mortals—the devil suggests a sin, the flesh takes delight in it, and the spirit consents to it.[1] But how was

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 1; *Mor.* iv. 49; *Epp.* xi. 56; *Reg. Past.* iii. 29.

it with the sinless Christ? Gregory asserts that the devil tempted Christ in three ways: through the appetite, through the desire of vain-glory, and through avarice.[1] But when he comes to define the exact nature of the temptation itself, in each case, he is compelled by his own theory to limit it to the mere naked suggestion of evil. For the flesh, in the case of our Lord, being without taint of sin and destitute of evil passions, could feel no pleasure in the sin suggested, and therefore also the spirit could not be corrupted into yielding its assent. There was no element in Christ which could respond to the suggestion from without. The temptation was therefore purely external (*foris non intus*), being limited to the mere suggestion of evil—a suggestion in which, owing to His constitution, Christ felt no pleasure, and to which He yielded no consent. But surely this barren suggestion cannot be regarded as, in any real sense, a temptation. A true temptation implies consciousness of a struggle. But, according to Gregory, Christ experienced no struggle. "God, who was incarnate in the Virgin's womb and came into the world without sin, had no contradictory elements in Himself. Hence He could be tempted by suggestion, but delight in sin never touched Him. And therefore all the devil's temptation was without and not within."[2] A true temptation again implies anguish and terror and a sense of weakness. But according to Gregory, Christ felt nothing of this; "for He so condescended to take the temptation on Himself externally (*exterius*), that His mind, being inwardly stablished fast in His Divinity, should still remain unshaken"[3]; and therefore Satan, "assailing Him with three temptations, had no power to defile the Heart of God."[4] Certainly on this theory, Christ's victory over the devil was in no sense a moral achievement, but was merely the inevitable result of His constitution. The miracle of His birth precluded the possibility of a moral struggle: the overshadowing power of His Divinity prevented His experiencing the distressing sensations of a tempted man. The whole temptation is resolved into the presentation before the mind of

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 2, 3.
[2] *Ibid.* 16, § 1.
[3] *Mor.* iii. 30.
[4] *Ibid.* ix. 44: "Tribus Redemptorem nostrum tentationibus pulsans, cor Dei temerare non valuit."

Christ of a series of evil ideas or images,[1] which He inevitably and instantly rejects. It is no temptation whatever.

I conclude, then, from the foregoing, that Gregory was of the opinion that the mind of Jesus, through His union with the Word, lost all human limitations, so that in reality it could neither be ignorant of anything, nor distressed by anything, nor tempted through anything, although for special purposes at special times the forms of ignorance, perturbation, and temptation were assumed. But to maintain this is to maintain a doketism which seriously impairs the humanity of our Lord, and restricts the kenosis to the sphere of the body and its attributes. The Son of God, that is, surrendered only such of His Divine attributes as were incompatible with His assumption of human flesh. Within this sphere—and apparently only within this sphere—was He perfectly and truly Man. Hence when Gregory wishes to lay stress on the humanity of Jesus, he dwells on His submission to physical vicissitudes. "The Lord," he writes, "had these infirmities of our mortal state, which we endure as the desert of our iniquity, as bonds with which, of His own accord, He willed to be bound, even to death, and which He marvellously loosed by His resurrection. For to be hungry, to thirst, to be weary, to be bound, to be scourged, to be crucified, was the bond of our mortality."[2] In this enumeration the "bonds of mortality" are all physical. They are the infirmities of the flesh, not of the spirit. Christ, according to Gregory's teaching, possessed a human soul and a human body; but He was perfectly human, as we are, only in the latter. And Gregory appears to think that he has satisfied the claims of the perfect humanity of Jesus, when he confesses (as he emphatically does confess) "His very and true flesh, and His very and true death."[3]

It may be noted that Gregory, like Augustine, lays great

[1] Gregory did not notice that the temptation, in the case of our Lord, consisted in the offering, not so much of evil for good, as of lower goods for higher goods. He interprets the temptation as intrinsically evil (*Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 3), which is surely not the case. Hence he was obliged to limit it to mere suggestion.

[2] *Mor.* xxx. 67; cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 1, § 15: "Videbant (Iudaei) esurientem, sitientem, comedentem, bibentem, lassescentem, dormientem, et purum hunc hominem esse aestimabant."

[3] *Mor.* xii. 30.

stress on the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus. This, of course, was the consequence of his adoption of the Augustinian doctrine of the propagation of original sin through procreation, and of the sinfulness inherent in all sexual desire. If Christ was to come into the world without taint of sin, He could not be the fruit of ordinary carnal intercourse. Hence He was miraculously "conceived by the Holy Ghost" and "born of the Virgin Mary,"[1] who remained a Virgin both at and after the birth.[2] Gregory, however, makes no attempt to prove, in a formal way, the necessity of the Virgin Birth. He leaves it to be inferred from his general doctrine of human corruption.

(2) *The Work of Christ in Redemption.*

Gregory invariably prefers to dwell on the Incarnation in its soteriological aspect. His favourite titles for Christ are "the Redeemer" and "the Meditator between God and man"; and the redemption of mankind through the Saviour's life and death was the constant theme of his teaching. "He helped man, being made Man; that, because to mere man there was no way open of returning to God, a way of returning should be made through the God-Man. For we were far removed from the Righteous and Immortal One, being mortal and unrighteous. But between the Immortal and Righteous One and ourselves the mortal and unrighteous, appeared the Mediator of God and man, mortal and righteous, who might at once own death with men and righteousness with God, and, by uniting in His own

[1] *Mor.* xi. 70: "Beatus Iob incarnationem Redemptoris intuitus, solum vidit in mundo hominem de immundo semine non esse conceptum, qui sic in mundum venit ex Virgine, ut nihil haberet de immunda conceptione. Neque enim ex viro et femina, sed ex sancto Spiritu et Maria virgine processit. Solus ergo in carne sua vere mundus exstitit, qui delectatione carnis tangi non potuit, quia nec per carnalem huc delectationem venit." *Ibid.* xviii. 84: "Nos quippe etsi sancti efficimur, non tamen sancti nascimur, quia ipsa naturae corruptibilis conditione constringimur, ut cum Propheta dicamus: *Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in delictis peperit me mater mea.* Ille autem solus veraciter sanctus natus est, qui ut ipsam conditionem naturae corruptibilis vinceret, ex commistione carnalis copulae conceptus non est." *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 17: "Quis itaque homo sine peccato est, nisi ille qui in peccatis conceptus non est?"

[2] *Mor.* xxiv. 3; xviii. 85; *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 1; 38, § 3.

self the lowest and the highest, might open up for us a way of returning to God."[1] To this subject of the redemptive work of Christ Gregory seems to have devoted much study and reflection. His conclusions have the appearance of having been carefully thought out, and not merely taken down from Augustine and the Symbol. It is true, of course, that Gregory still follows the lead of Augustine and some others, but here he seems to have more completely appropriated the thoughts he found, and to have absorbed them into a more or less consistent scheme of his own.

The work of the Redeemer is treated by Gregory from various points of view. Sometimes he represents it as the abolition of the reign of the devil, which was legally abrogated by the death of Christ. Sometimes, but less frequently, it is regarded as the satisfaction of Divine justice and the propitiation of an offended God by means of a sinless Sacrifice. Sometimes it is represented as the restoration of the human race through the mystical incorporation with Christ its Head, or through the illumination of His teaching and example. These ideas often cut across one another, but for convenience they may here be distinguished and treated separately under the following headings: deliverance from the rule of the devil; deliverance from the wrath of God; deliverance from sin itself.

Deliverance from the rule of the devil. In accordance with the views generally prevalent in the Church from the time of Origen to that of Anselm, the redemption is treated principally as the deliverance of the human race from the power of Satan. In developing this idea Gregory has, indeed, avoided certain expressions used by his predecessors to which objection had been taken. Thus, for instance, he nowhere speaks of the blood or soul of Christ being given as a ransom to Satan. But, though free from such expressions, the deception-theory which he advocates is somewhat grotesque.

Gregory's doctrine of the deliverance from the devil may be outlined somewhat as follows. Through the sin of Adam Satan had acquired a power over the human race. This power, however unjustly it might have been sought for, was in itself just, (*a*) because man had originally submitted to it by sinning of his own free will, and (*b*) because God Himself had granted it to

[1] *Mor.* xxii. 42; cf. *ibid.* xxiv. 2; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 20.

Satan in punishment of man's sin.[1] From Adam to Christ no man had been free from sin,[2] and all had therefore passed under the power of Satan and had become "debtors to death"[3] in accordance with the Divine sentence which made death the penalty of sin.[4] Even the holiest saints of the Old Testament had passed at their death into the confinement of the lower world, because, however great their righteousness might have been, the taint of original sin still remained in them.[5] So far, then, the power of Satan had prevailed. All men alike were his subjects, and all alike were doomed.

Now, it was the purpose of the Redeemer to break this chain of sin and release mankind from its servitude to Satan. And this it was His will to accomplish, "not by an arbitrary act of power, but by reason" (*non virtute sed ratione*).[6] So long as the devil exercised his power over sinners alone, he was within his right. But if he presumed to lay hold on one "in whom he found no debt of sin," one who was not legally subject to him, then he lost his right. In other words, if Satan once overstepped his right, then he might justly be deprived of it altogether: if he presumed unjustly to destroy one sinless man, then his power over sinners might be justly taken away. Therefore the Redeemer designed to give Himself up to the devil, to submit to the death that was not His due, in order that those who were justly debtors might be released from their debt.[7]

But how was this design to be accomplished? Gregory calls the devil an "irrational animal,"[8] but he was not so irrational as to attempt to combat the Son of God. Had he

[1] *Mor.* ii. 17: "Satanae voluntas semper iniqua est, sed nunquam potestas iniusta; quia a semetipso voluntatem habet, sed a Domino potestatem. Quod enim ipse facere inique appetit, hoc Deus fieri nonnisi iuste permittit." *Ibid.* ii. 41: "Humanas mentes iure possedit, quia in culpae suae vinculo volentes astrinxit." Cf. *ibid.* xiv. 46; xviii. 4: xxxiii. 28.

[2] *Ibid.* ii. 41.

[3] *Ibid.* xvii. 46: "Diabolus in illa nos parentis primi radice supplantans, sub captivitate sua quasi iuste tenuit hominem, qui libero arbitrio conditus, ei iniusta suadenti consensit. Ad vitam namque conditus in libertate propriae voluntatis, sponte sua factus est debitor mortis."

[4] *Ibid.* xi. 26.

[5] *Ibid.* iv. 56; xii. 13; xiii. 49; xx. 66; xxix. 23; *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 4; 22, § 6.

[6] *Mor.* xvii. 46. [7] *Ibid.* xvii. 47. [8] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 30.

known for a certainty that Christ was God, he would never have attempted to overthrow Him. In order, therefore, that Satan should be encouraged to do his worst on Christ, it was necessary that he should be deceived as to His Personality, and should believe Him to be mere man, who might be induced to commit sin and so become legally Satan's subject. For this reason the Son of God became incarnate. He assumed humanity to deceive the devil. He used His body as a bait, and the great fish, snapping it up, got caught on the hidden hook of His Divinity.[1]

The deception-theory of Origen is adopted by Gregory and elaborated with many curious details. He says that when Christ first appeared on earth Satan suspected Him to be the Son of God, who was come to be his own destroyer. But when he perceived that He was subject to passion and all the vicissitudes of humanity, he grew doubtful respecting His Divinity. He now imagined that He was not God by nature, but only a man who was kept by the grace of God.[2] Hence he endeavoured to prove Him by the temptation.[3] Christ, the Second Man, was tempted exactly as the First Man had been tempted—through the appetite, through the desire of vain-glory, and the desire of power. But He was tempted in vain.[4] When Satan realized this, and when he witnessed the miracles that Jesus did, he returned to his first belief, that this was indeed the Son of God. But when he saw that Christ continued subject to the sufferings and infirmities of human nature, he once more changed his mind. The humility of Christ seemed to him to prove that He could not be God.[5] Therefore, although he knew that he had no rights over the sinless Jesus, yet, as a last chance of victory, he endeavoured to seduce Him into sin through the fear of

[1] *Mor.* xxxiii. 14: "Dominus noster ad humani generis redemptionem veniens, velut quemdam de se in necem diaboli hamum fecit. Assumpsit enim corpus, ut in eo Behemoth iste quasi escam suam mortem carnis appeteret. Quam mortem dum in illo iniuste appetit, nos quos quasi iuste tenebat amisit. In hamo ergo eius incarnationis captus est, quia dum in illo appetit escam corporis, transfixus est aculeo divinitatis. Ibi quippe inerat humanitas quae ad se devoratorem duceret, ibi divinitas quae perforaret, ibi aperta infirmitas quae provocaret, ibi occulta virtus quae raptoris faucem transfigeret. In hamo igitur captus est, quia inde interiit unde devoravit." Cf. *ibid.* xxxiii. 17; *Hom. in Ev.* 25, § 8.

[2] *Mor.* ii. 43.

[3] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 16.

[4] *Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 2.

[5] *Mor.* iii. 28; *Hom. in Ev.* 25, § 8.

suffering and death.[1] He brought about the betrayal, and delivered up Jesus into the hands of his wicked satellites.[2] But once more he failed. Satan now knew that if this Sinless One were actually sacrificed, contrary to justice, his own power over sinners would, in punishment, justly be taken away. Therefore he tried to prevent the deed by sending a terrifying dream to Pilate's wife. But it was too late. Christ was crucified, and "the unjust death of the Just One broke the bonds of death for man, who by sinning had deserved to die."[3]

The justice and reasonableness of this victory over the devil is strongly emphasized by Gregory. For, according to him, Satan's claim to possess mankind was based on two things—the successful temptation of Adam, and the Divine law which made death the penalty of sin. But Christ annulled this claim. For in the first place, the devil lost the right he had gained over mankind by the successful temptation of its first representative, when he tempted its second Representative in vain. The human race, which in the person of Adam had succumbed, in the person of Christ was victorious. And, secondly, the devil could no longer plead the law of justice against sinful man, because he had himself violated that law by putting to death a sinless man. In striking Him over whom he had no rights, he lost the power of striking those over whom he had rights. Thus, says Gregory, our Lord "let loose Satan to rage against Himself, that by the very act which outwardly brought Him low, He might set us both outwardly and inwardly free."[4]

Deliverance from the wrath of God. Side by side with the view of redemption as deliverance from the power of the devil, we find in Gregory traces of a theory of sacrifice and vicarious punishment, which represents Christ as propitiating God and satisfying His justice, by suffering in the sinner's stead. Gregory's

[1] *Mor.* ii. 45; iii. 28; xvii. 47.

[2] *Ibid.* ix. 44.

[3] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 31.

[4] *Ibid.* iii. 29. On the ground of this freedom bestowed on the race by Christ, Gregory advocates the liberation of slaves. *Epp.* vi. 12: "Cum Redemptor noster totius conditor creaturae ad hoc propitiatus humanam voluit carnem adsumere, ut divinitatis suae gratia disrupto quo tenebamur capti vinculo servitutis pristinae nos restitueret libertati, salubriter agitur, si homines, quos ab initio natura liberos protulit et ius gentium iugo substituit servitutis, in ea qua nati fuerant manumittentis beneficio libertate reddantur."

exposition of this view, however, is sketchy, and is left incomplete in many important particulars. It is based on the proposition that for every sin an adequate penalty must be paid.[1] Guilt can only be removed by a proportionate sacrifice. But what sacrifice could man offer, which should be great enough to atone for sin? "It was not just," says Gregory, "that for rational man mere brute beasts should be sacrificed and slain. Wherefore the Apostle says: *It was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.* Then if brute creatures were not worthy victims for a rational creature, that is, for man, a man was to be sought for who should be offered for men, that for a rational creature committing sin a rational victim might be offered. But the difficulty was that a man without sin could not be found. And yet no victim offered in our stead could cleanse us from sin unless it was itself untainted by sin. For the defiled could never have cleansed the defiled. What was required, then, was a rational victim, that is, man; and a victim capable of cleansing, that is, sinless man. But what man could be without sin if he was sprung from a combination in sin? Therefore on our behalf the Son of God came into the womb of the Virgin; there for our sakes He was made man. Nature, not sin, was assumed by Him. He offered a sacrifice on our behalf. He set forth His own body on behalf of sinners, a victim void of sin, that both by His human nature He might be capable of dying, and by His righteousness He might be capable of purifying."[2]

According to this view, the Redeemer is represented as the Sacrifice offered up to God in satisfaction of the sin of man. The Sinless One paid the penalty of the sinner, so that at once, the law of God's justice was vindicated and the sinner was released from the punishment that was his due.[3] By His death He made the scale of mercy heavier than the scale of justice, and for the sake of His woes our sins are forgiven.[4] Thus, says Gregory, the Redeemer "withstood God, that He should not

[1] *Mor.* ix. 54: "Delinquenti Dominus nequaquam parcit, quia delictum sine ultione non deserit."

[2] *Ibid.* xvii. 46.

[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 33, § 8; *Mor.* iii. 27.

[4] *Mor.* vii. 2.

smite," "moderated the wrath of the Judge by undergoing death," "appeased the indignant Judge" and "exhibited in Himself those works by which God might be reconciled to man."[1] For "because there was no one for whose merits God could have been reconciled to us, the Only-begotten of the Father, taking on Himself the form of our weakness, alone manifested Himself just, in order that He might intercede for sinners."[2] At the same time, while in this teaching Gregory lays the emphasis on the justice of God, which was satisfied by the Passion, he does not neglect to bring forward the complementary truth of God's love in providing the Sacrifice. "It was due to the love of God alone that His Only-begotten Son joined to Himself the souls of the elect. *For so God loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son.*"[3]

It should be noticed that in this theory of atonement by sacrifice, Gregory, while laying stress on the significance of the death of Christ as the consequence of and the propitiation for human sin,[4] yet does not admit that, even in view of sin, there was any absolute necessity for that death. Other plans for man's redemption might have been devised by the infinite wisdom of God, although none would have exhibited so perfectly God's abounding love to man. "Although He could have helped us even without dying, yet He chose to succour men by dying, for He would have loved us too little had He not taken even our wounds upon Himself; nor would He have shown the strength of His love for us, had He not for a time Himself endured what He took away from us. He found us subject to suffering and death, and He Who made us out of nothing could assuredly even without dying have withdrawn us from suffering. But to show how great is the power of His compassion, He deigned to become for us what He was unwilling that we should be, and therefore for a time He endured death Himself that He might free us from it for ever."[5] Hence, although in speaking of the atonement Gregory makes frequent allusion to the death of Christ, and is fond of pointing out how that, by His single death (in the flesh) man is redeemed from the double death (of flesh and spirit),[6] yet, at the same time, he refers, not so much

[1] *Mor.* ix. 61.
[2] *Ibid.* xxiv. 5; cf. xxiv. 6.
[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 38, § 9.
[4] *Mor.* iii. 26.
[5] *Mor.* xx. 69.
[6] *Ibid.* iv. 31; ix. 41.

to the death as to the whole human life of Christ, as the cause of the reconciliation between God and man. It is the Incarnation, with all its consequences, that effects the salvation of mankind. The propitiatory sacrifice was begun with the Saviour's birth and carried on through His whole life, and it is still being offered, in that the Redeemer continually intercedes with His Father by exhibiting His Incarnation on man's behalf. "The Redeemer offers a sacrifice for us without ceasing, for without ceasing He exhibits to the Father His Incarnation on our behalf. For His Incarnation is itself the offering for our cleansing, and while He shows Himself as man, He is the intercession that washes out man's misdeeds. By the mystery of His humanity He offers a perpetual sacrifice, since those things also that He cleanses are eternal."[1] Man, then, according to Gregory, is delivered from the wrath of God, not simply nor even principally by the death, but by the whole incarnate life of Christ. "I made Myself Man," so Gregory makes the Redeemer say, "to gain propitiation for mankind, and in manifesting Myself as Man I found a way of justly making propitiation for him."[2] And thus Gregory, in summing up the restoration-work of Christ, puts His death side by side with His teaching, His example, and His resurrection. "To this end the Lord appeared in the flesh, that He might arouse the life of man by His teaching, kindle it by His example, redeem it by His death, and renew it by His resurrection."[3]

Deliverance from sin itself. Besides redeeming man from the power of the devil, and propitiating an offended God, the Saviour freed mankind from the bonds of sin itself, partly by means of the incorporation of humanity with Himself as Head, partly through spiritual illumination. For, in dealing with the problem, how man is subjectively redeemed by Christ, Gregory suggests a solution partly mystical and partly ethical. The first

[1] *Mor.* i. 32. For the interpretation of the perpetual intercession of Christ as the perpetual manifestation of His humanity, see also *ibid.* xxii. 42: "Unigenito Filio pro homine interpellare est apud coaeternum Patrem seipsum hominem demonstrare, eique pro humana natura rogasse est eandem naturam in divinitatis suae celsitudine suscepisse. Interpellat igitur pro nobis Dominus, non voce sed miseratione, quia quod damnari in electis noluit, suscipiendo liberavit." Cf. *ibid.* xxiv. 4.

[2] *Ibid.* xxiv. 6.

[3] *Ibid.* xxi. 11.

he bases on the idea of the intimate connexion subsisting between the body of the redemed and Christ their Head; the second, on the moving power of Christ's teaching and example. Both of these views Gregory found in Augustine, and reproduced in his usual manner.

The mystical theory of man's deliverance from sin may be shortly stated thus. The elect are themselves stained with sin, yet, by means of the Incarnation, they are united to One who is free from sin. They are the members of the Body, of which He is the Head. But since the Body and the Head are One Person, the virtues of the Head are appropriated by the members. Therefore, on the one hand, the elect are safe from the devil, who has no power to destroy the members of the Sinless One; and, on the other hand, they find acceptance with God, in Whose righteousness they, through their Head, participate. Thus they are freed from slavery to sin, because they are one with Him Who is truly free; and they have sure hope of heaven, for where the Head is there shall also the members be. The redemptive principle is found in union with Christ.[1]

In the second place, the ethical theory represents man as delivered from sin by following the precepts, and imitating the example of Jesus Christ. Here redemption turns on illumination. Gregory teaches that man had been blinded at the Fall, so that he no longer knew either God, or the true life, or even his own corrupt condition; and he had come to believe that the place of his exile was his true home.[2] To dispel this ignorance and to remind man of the things he had forgotten, the Son of God appeared in the flesh. He first taught man to know God, by manifesting God in the flesh. He then taught man how to draw near to God, by setting an example for imitation.[3] In all that He did and suffered He had in view

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 39, § 9; *Mor.* iii. 25; xiii. 27; xix. 22; xxvii. 29, 30; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* v. 1.

[2] *Mor.* vii. 2; ix. 50; xi. 58; *Hom. in Ev.* 2, § 1; 31, § 7.

[3] *Mor.* xxiv. 2: "Vitiosus homo corrigi non poterat nisi per Deum. Videri autem debuit qui corrigebat, ut praebendo imitationis formam, anteactae malitiae mutaret vitam. Sed videri ab homine non poterat Deus; ergo homo factus est, ut videri potuisset." (For the expression, "imitationis formam," compare *ibid.* xx. 69: "pietatis formam Mediator nobis dedit.") *Ibid.* xxi. 11: "Ad hoc Dominus apparuit in carne, ut humanam vitam admonendo excitaret, exempla praebendo accenderet, moriendo redimeret resurgendo repararet."

man's instruction.[1] "He was made man among us, not only to redeem us by the shedding of His blood, but also to change us by setting an example."[2] "He came in His human nature in order that He might be seen: He wished to be seen in order that He might be imitated."[3] And it is this imitation of Christ which delivers us from sin.[4] Man is redeemed by following the precepts and copying the pattern of the Sinless One.

In estimating Gregory's doctrine of the work of Christ in redemption, I observe, in the first place, that his view of redemption is largely negative. Christ swept away obstacles to our reconciliation with God. He freed us from the servitude of the devil; He satisfied with His death the demands of Divine Justice, thereby delivering us from God's wrath; He banished our ignorance. But He did not effect a complete, actual, positive reconciliation. He only made such reconciliation a possibility which might be realized by human effort (the following of Christ's example). It cannot, of course, be denied that there are positive elements in Gregory's scheme. The doctrine of the mystical union is one of them. But, on the whole, Gregory assigns to the work of redemption a negative result—the destruction of obstacles to man's approach to God. And it follows from this that the work of Christ needs to be supplemented by penance and good works. The death of Christ and penance are the two factors in the scheme of salvation: man must finish what Christ began. Such is the doctrine explicitly maintained by the author of the *Commentary on the First of Kings*, attributed to Gregory: "Christ, in His work for us, did not fulfil all things. By His cross, indeed, He redeemed all men, but it remained that he who strives to be redeemed and to reign with Him should be crucified. Paul certainly realized this that was lacking when he said, *If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.* As if he were to say, 'What Christ accomplished avails only for him who *fills up that which is lacking.*'"[5]

Gregory's conception of the forgiveness of sins, again, is noticeable. He appears to understand by forgiveness principally the remission or part remission of penalties. The death of

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 2, § 6.
[2] *Mor.* xxx. 69.
[3] *Mor.* xxix. 1.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 19.
[5] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* iv. 4, 57.

Christ freed the baptized from the consequences of original sin; and in the case of sins committed after baptism, it availed to convert the eternal penalties into temporal penalties, which might be discharged by men in this life by an adequate amount of suffering, whether self-imposed or imposed on them by God for their good. Thus the death only procures forgiveness if supplemented by penance. "There is no means of absolving guilt," says Gregory, "which is not washed away by penance."[1] And elsewhere he writes: "The Lord is found to be our salvation in proportion as our sin is now rebuked by ourselves from fear of God. And therefore the elect never spare their own sins, that they may find the Judge of sin appeased. And they look to find Him hereafter truly their salvation, whom they now strictly fear as their Judge. For he that spareth himself now in sin is not spared hereafter in punishment."[2] Thus to Gregory the forgiveness of sins means the remission of the penalties of original sin, and the substitution of penance for the eternal penalties due to actual sin.[3] This is the main effect of the death of Christ.

Again, as the result of his view, Gregory makes reconciliation with God a thing entirely uncertain. No man can have any real security of salvation. No man can be sure that the death of Christ will avail for him. For no one can be sure whether he has done enough on his part to appropriate the merits of Christ and to appease God. Hence the doctrine of redemption brings man no happiness or peace of mind, but only begets terror and anxiety. The life of the redeemed becomes a continual striving to work out their salvation, and they can never tell whether, after all, their efforts will not be in vain. This doctrine of uncertainty—a favourite one with Gregory—will be dealt with more at length when we come to consider his views on Penance. In this connexion it need only be noticed.

In respect of the extent of the redemption, Gregory took a middle view. On the one hand, he limited the direct operation of the redemption to the human race. For whereas man in his original creation had somewhat of infirmity from the very beginning, *i.e.* his flesh, and whereas he fell from righteousness, not through his own device, but through the wicked prompting

[1] *Mor.* xvi. 82. [2] *Ibid.* xi. 48.

[3] See further the section on "Penance."

of another, his fall was the less heinous, and God had some reason for showing him compassion. But the apostate angels, who were free from fleshly weakness, and fell through their own wickedness, are not proper subjects for mercy. Hence man alone was restored by Christ.[1] But, on the other hand, though redemption is limited to man, the angels in heaven are affected by it, for redeemed men are promoted to fill up the places in the celestial hierarchy left vacant by the fallen angels. Thus, says Gregory, "in Christ are restored those things which are on earth, when sinners are converted to righteousness; and in Him are restored those things which are in heaven, when humbled men return to the place from which by pride apostate angels fell."[2]

The redemption of the saints of the Old Dispensation by the descent of Christ into hell is taught by Gregory. He says that by reason of original sin, the pre-Christian saints had been taken to the under-world, where they were kept "in quiet places," imprisoned, but without torment, until Christ came to set them free and conduct them to Paradise.[3] Gregory, however, limits this redemption to those who, although they lived before Christ, were yet Christian in faith and life.[4] And he expressly rejects the view that all who in hell acknowledged Jesus to be God, were delivered. Infidels and men of evil lives were left where they were, with their punishment unabated. And Gregory quotes Augustine's authority in maintaining the doctrine "that our Lord, descending into hell, rescued from durance those alone whom, while living in the flesh, He preserved by His grace in faith and good conduct."[5]

Section IV.—The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

The Nature of the Holy Spirit. On the nature of the Holy Spirit Gregory has little to say. He asserts the orthodox doctrine that the Spirit is consubstantial, coeternal, and coequal with the Father and the Son.[6] He interprets Paraclete to mean

[1] *Mor.* iv. 8; ix. 76.
[2] *Ibid.* xxxi. 99. Cf. [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* i. 1, 40.
[3] *Ibid.* iv. 56; xii. 13; xiii. 49; xx. 66; xxix. 23; *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 4; *ibid.* 22, § 6. A curious piece of exegesis is found in *Hom. in Ev.* 6, § 1.
[4] *Mor.* xii. 15; *Hom. in Ev.* 22, § 6. [5] *Epp.* vii. 15.
[6] *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 5; 26, § 2; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 5, § 9; *Mor.* xxvii. 34.

Comforter or Advocate, and explains that for the Spirit to make intercession for us does not imply subordination. He who intercedes is not less than He who receives the intercession. The Spirit intercedes only in the sense that He stirs up those whom He fills to make intercession.[1] Gregory says also that the Spirit is at the same time "stabilis" and "mobilis"—"stabilis," in that He embraces all things by virtue of His Nature; "mobilis," in that He makes His presence felt in all places and by individual persons.[2] Before the Incarnation, however, he confined His direct operations to the elect of Judaea.[3] In the thirtieth Homily on the Gospels Gregory propounds and answers some curious questions respecting the Holy Spirit. Why did He appear in flames of fire? Why did He appear at once in flames of fire and in tongues? Why did He appear as a dove? Why did He descend on Christ as a dove, and on the disciples as flames of fire? Gregory's solutions of these problems, if not convincing, are at least ingenious.[4]

The Double Procession. The question of the Procession of the Holy Spirit was, of course, still undecided. In the additions said to have been made to the Nicene Creed by the Council of Constantinople, and confirmed by the Council of Chalcedon, the Holy Spirit is alleged to proceed from the Father. And to this definition the authorities of the Eastern Church adhered, though they readily admitted, in conformity with Scripture, that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son as well as of the Father, that He is sent by the Son, and that He receives of the Son. On the other hand, the Fathers of the Latin Church, particularly Augustine, generally taught the Double Procession; and at the Third Synod of Toledo, in 589 A.D., the Filioque clause was added to the Latin translation of the Creed. As, however, no serious controversy on the subject had as yet broken out, both Eastern and Western writers frequently made use of loose and unguarded language, to which, at a later time, both sides were able to appeal as favouring their views. This was the case with Gregory. Although he was entirely of the same mind as

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 3: "Spiritus postulat quia ad postulandum eos quos repleverit inflammat." Cf. *Mor.* ii. 58.

[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 5, § 10.

[3] *Ibid.* i. 8, § 26.

[4] *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 5, 6; cf. *Mor.* i. 2.

Augustine, he sometimes expresses himself in terms which, though never really at variance with the Latin view, were yet such as an orthodox Greek of later times would have found unexceptionable. He speaks of the Spirit "proceeding from the Father and receiving of that which is the Son's."[1] He says: "A sound proceeds from the mouth of the Lord when His consubstantial Spirit comes to us through His Son"[2]; and again: "No man ever had all the operations of the Holy Spirit at the same time save the Mediator between God and man, whose is the same Spirit which proceedeth from the Father before all ages."[3] But although he makes use of ambiguous expressions such as these, Gregory leaves us in no doubt as to his real opinion. In several places he distinctly asserts that the Holy Spirit proceeds both from the Father and the Son. "The Spirit of both," he says, "proceeds coeternal with both. He who is begotten is not subsequent to Him by whom He is begotten, and He who is produced by procession is not subsequent to Those from whom He proceeds."[4] "The sending of the Spirit is the same as the procession by which He proceeds from the Father and the Son."[5] "The Spirit even in substance proceeds from the Son."[6] "Christ imparts to the hearts of His disciples that Holy Spirit which proceeds from Himself."[7] These expressions are conclusive. Here, as elsewhere, Gregory took his doctrine from Augustine, and was clearly in sympathy with the Spanish Catholics who inserted into the Creed the dogma of the Double Procession.

The Work of the Holy Spirit. In respect of the work of the Spirit, Gregory distinguishes the following ways in which He acts on the heart of man.

First and foremost, He inflames the heart of the believer with Divine love. "For the Holy Spirit Himself is Love. Whence also John says, *God is Love.* He, then, who with

[1] *Mor.* v. 65.
[2] *Ibid.* xxvii. 34.
[3] *Ibid.* xxix. 74. In *Dial.* ii. 38 the Greek version differs from the Latin, which runs: "Constat quia Paracletus Spiritus a Patre semper procedat et Filio."
[4] *Mor.* xxx. 17.
[5] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 2.
[6] *Mor.* ii. 92.
[7] *Ibid.* i. 30: "qui a se procedit' Some MSS. read "ex se," probably a later correction.

sincere mind longs after God, already has Him Whom he loves. For no one could love God unless he had Him Whom he loves."[1] This love which the Holy Spirit inspires in man is an active love. "The love of God," says Gregory, "is never otiose. If it exists, it works great things; if it does not work, it is not love."[2] It may be distinguished more acurately as love of God in Himself, and love of God in His servants—that is, love of God and love of our neighbour. And Gregory asserts that the twofold sending of the Holy Spirit—once by our Lord while He was yet on earth, and again after His ascension into heaven—was a symbol of this double love which the Spirit would inspire. "The Spirit is given on earth that we may love our neighbour. The Spirit is given from heaven that we may love God."[3]

Secondly, the Holy Spirit illuminates the mind; for "so soon as the Spirit touches the mind, He teaches, and the very act of touching is teaching."[4] This teaching is both outward and public, through the words of inspired Scripture and inspired preachers[5]; and also interior and secret.[6] If the former is to profit a man, it must be accompanied by the latter. But this inward inspiration by which the Spirit speaks to the soul is an ineffable mystery.[7] It is a wordless illumination, "incorporeal light." Gregory says: "For the Spirit of God to speak to us, is for Him to intimate by His hidden power what is to be done, and to instruct in an instant, without the medium of sound or the slowness of speech, the ignorant heart of man in hidden mysteries. We know that the bodily hearing does not comprehend at once all the sayings that are addressed to it, since it understands reasons by means of words, and words separately by syllables; whereas our sight, being turned upon an object, apprehends the whole object suddenly and at once. So, then, the words of God addressed to us from within are seen rather than heard; because, while He infuses Himself without the delay of words, He illumines by His instant light the darkness of our ignorance."[8] The enlightenment thus imparted by the Spirit is twofold—knowledge of God and knowledge of self. The

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 1.
[2] *Ibid.* 30, § 2.
[3] *Ibid.* 26, § 3; 30, § 10.
[4] *Ibid.* 30, § 8.
[5] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 8; *Mor.* xix. 24.
[6] *Mor.* xxvii. 41.
[7] *Mor.* xxvii. 41.
[8] *Ibid.* xxviii. 2.

knowledge of God, though as full as humanity is capable of receiving, is relative and imperfect, since human faculties cannot grasp the mystery of the Eternal.[1] Therefore, in this regard, the Spirit is compared to "a gentle breath," and to "a rushing mighty wind." He is "gentle," in that He tempers the knowledge of Himself to our perceptions, so as in some degree to be brought under our cognizance; but He is "vehement," in that, however He may temper the knowledge, yet by His coming "He confounds while He illumines the darkness of our frail condition."[2] The knowledge of self, on the other hand, is full and complete. The glimpse afforded us of the Divine Nature is sufficient to make us aware of the extent of our own wretchedness.[3] Thus the Spirit illumines the hearts, not, indeed, of all men, but of some from every class of men—rich and poor, strong and weak, noble and base-born, wise and foolish. God, says Gregory, "sendeth water upon all things, who by the gift of the Holy Spirit calls to the knowledge of Himself from every class of men."[4]

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit enables man to resist temptation. On the one hand, He strengthens man within, and by implanting the love of God in his heart, gives him power of resistance.[5] On the other hand, He modifies the temptations themselves, so that either they do not come upon us many together, or else that only such assail us as we have strength to endure.[6] Nevertheless, the Spirit sometimes withdraws from the soul for a season, and leaves it under temptation in order that it may know its own weakness, and learn with humility the necessity of support and grace.[7]

Fourthly, the Holy Spirit transforms the life of man.[8] Not only does He regenerate in baptism,[9] but in those who have fallen after baptism He implants the grace of contrition. This grace is the peculiar gift of the Spirit, and by it man is at once changed. He contemns the low things which he once

[1] *Mor.* v. 52, 53, 66.
[2] *Ibid.* v. 65.
[3] *Ibid.* v. 66.
[4] *Ibid.* vi. 21.
[5] *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 2; *Mor.* ix. 80.
[6] *Mor.* xxix. 46.
[7] *Mor.* ii. 78, 79; ix. 80.
[8] *Ibid.* vi. 20: "Sterilitatem perditi hominis repletione Spiritus ad fructificationem format (Deus)." *Ibid.* ix. 80: "Humana cogitatio, quae peccati sui sterilitate aruit, per vim sancti Spiritus, quasi irrigata terra viridescit."
Hom. in Ezech. i. 8, § 29; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* iv. 14.

desired, and seeks the high things which he once despised; he renounces worldly cares, and is eager for contemplation; he is cold to his former habits, and ardent after new pursuits; he longs only for the invisible.[1] "O what a consummate artist is that Spirit!" cries Gregory. "Without the tardy process of learning, the man is impelled onward to all that this Spirit wills. No sooner does He touch the soul than He teaches, and His touch is itself a teaching; for at one and the same time He enlightens and converts the human heart, so that it suddenly turns stranger to what it was, and becomes what it was not."[2] The methods of this transformation are thus described: "At one time He pierces us with love, at another time with terror. Sometimes He shows us how little are the things of the present life, and lifts our hearts to desire the eternal world; sometimes He first points out the things of eternity, that the things of time may afterwards grow worthless in our eyes. Sometimes He discloses to us our own evil deeds, and thence draws us on even to feel sorrow for the evil deeds of others. Sometimes He presents to our eyes the evil deeds of others, and reforms us from our own wickedness by piercing us with a marvellous compunction."[3] The transformation is wrought gradually. The Holy Spirit takes more and more hold on us, and as His virtue is increased in us, our own mundane spirit dwindles and dies. "But then we make complete advance in God when we have wholly and utterly fallen away from ourselves."[4]

The Gifts of the Spirit. Speaking of the gifts of the Spirit

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, § 44; *Mor.* v. 50; xi. 15; xxvii. 41–43.

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 8: "Libet oculos fidei in virtutem opificis huius attollere, atque sparsim patres testamenti novi ac veteris considerare. Ecce, apertis eisdem oculis fidei, David, Amos, Danielem, Petrum, Paulum, Matthaeum intueor, et sanctus iste Spiritus qualis sit artifex considerare volo, sed in ipsa mea consideratione deficio. Implet namque citharoedum puerum et psalmistam facit. Implet pastorem armentarium sycamoros vellicantem, et prophetam facit. Implet abstinentem puerum, et iudicem senum facit. Implet piscatorem, et praedicatorem facit. Implet persecutorem et doctorem gentium facit. Implet publicanum et evangelistam facit. O qualis est artifex iste Spiritus! Nulla ad discendum mora agitur in omne quod voluerit. Mox ut tetigerit mentem, docet, solumque tetigisse docuisse est. Nam humanam mentem subito ut illustrat immutat; abnegat hunc repente quod erat, exhibet repente quod non erat."

[3] *Mor.* v. 51.

[4] *Ibid.* xxii. 46.

in a general way, Gregory distinguishes "those without which no one can attain to eternal life" (such, for instance, as humility faith, hope, charity), and "those by which holiness is manifested for the good of others" (for example, prophecy and miracles); and he asserts that the former, being necessary to salvation, are never wholly withdrawn from the elect, but the latter are sometimes taken away "in order that those powers which belong to Him may be had with greater humility, inasmuch as when they are possessed they cannot be retained."[1]

The seven "gifts of the Spirit" (wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, godliness, fear of the Lord) are made the subject of an allegorical disquisition. Gregory explains that the number 7 is composed of the numbers 3 and 4, which multiplied together make the perfect number 12. From which he argues that "those whom the Spirit of sevenfold grace has filled, He makes perfect, by imparting to them not merely the knowledge of the Trinity, but also the power of exercising the four cardinal virtues"; in other words, the Spirit of sevenfold grace enables us to perfect faith by works, and works by faith. And the Spirit is poured out in more abundant measure "when the practice of the virtues is engendered through knowledge of the Trinity, and when the vision of the Trinity is attained through practice of the virtues."[2] Gregory lays stress on the order of the gifts, which he calls the seven steps of the spiritual life,[3] and he points out how each gift fortifies a man against a particular temptation.[4]

As to the operations of the Spirit, Gregory notices that no man possesses them all at once, lest he should become puffed up with pride and forgetful of charity. "Almighty God acts with the souls of men as He does with the different countries of the earth. He might have given fruit of all

[1] *Mor.* ii. 91. The former gifts are "bona summa"; the latter, "bona media." Cf. *ibid.* xxvii. 76: "Bona enim summa sunt fides, spes, charitas. Quae cum veraciter habentur, in malum inflecti non possunt. Bona autem sunt media prophetia, doctrina, curationum virtus, et caetera, quae ita inter utrumque sunt posita, ut aliquando per haec sola aeterna patria, aliquando vero gloria terrena requiratur. Medias ergo has virtutes dicimus, quas ad quodcunque mens appetit inclinamus."

[2] *Ibid.* xxxv. 15. So in *ibid.* i. 38 Gregory points out that by adding 3 (Faith, Hope, Charity) to 7 (the seven graces) we get 10 (perfection).

[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 7, § 7.

[4] *Mor.* ii. 77.

kinds to every land. But if every land did not require the fruits of another, there would be no fellowship maintained with the other. Hence it comes to pass that to one He gives a superfluity of wine, to another of oil, to another of cattle, to another of the fruits of the field, so that, since one gives what the other has not, and the latter supplies what the former wants, the separated lands are united by a communication of gifts. And like different countries, the souls of the saints are related to one another. By reciprocally communicating what they have received, as different countries share with one another their respective products, they are all united in one love."[1] To this rule, however, Gregory makes one exception. "No man," he writes, "ever possessed all the operations of the Holy Spirit at once, except the sole Mediator between God and man, whose is the same Spirit, who proceedeth from the Father before all ages."[2] But the relation between the Mediator and the Spirit was unique. "The Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, in all things has Him always and continually present, since also the same Spirit in substance proceeds from Him. And thus, though the Spirit abides in the holy preachers, He is rightly said to abide in the Mediator in a special manner; since in them He abides of grace for a particular object, but in Him He abides substantially for all ends. For as our body is cognizant of the sense of touch only, but the head of the body has the use of all the five senses at once, so that it sees, hears, tastes, smells, and touches; so the members of the Supreme Head shine out in some of the powers, but the Head Himself blazes forth in all of them. The Spirit, then, abides in Him in another sort, since He never departs from Him by reason of His nature."[3]

On the extraordinary spiritual gifts of Prophecy and Miracles Gregory has some interesting remarks. Prophecy is treated with some fulness in the first of the *Homilies on Ezekiel.* Here, in distinguishing the "times" of prophecy, Gregory remarks that "prophecy is so called, not because it predicts the future, but because it reveals what is hidden."[4] The prophet is the revealer. Sometimes he proves the truth of

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, § 34. [2] *Mor.* xxix. 74.
[3] *Mor.* ii. 92.
[4] "Non quia praedicit ventura, sed quia prodit occulta."

what he says about the past by accurately predicting the future; sometimes, by bringing to light what is past, he gains credence for what he foretells of the future. Hence the past and the future respectively are used by the prophet to attest the truth of his revelations about the future and the past: the revelation of the present is self-attesting, and needs not to be proved from either past or future. Gregory recognizes and discusses various kinds and degrees of prophecy. "For the Spirit of prophecy does not touch the mind of the prophet always in the same way." Sometimes a prophet receives illumination respecting the present, but not respecting the future; sometimes respecting the future, but not respecting the present: sometimes equally in respect of both; sometimes equally in respect of past, present, and future. Similarly, the prophet sometimes understands the past and not the future; sometimes the future and not the past. Sometimes the Spirit of prophecy discloses the present only partially, or the future only partially. Again, the prophet at times sees clearly the present and the immediate future, but cannot pierce the distant future; at times he sees only the distant future; at times both together. The Spirit of prophecy does not always abide in the prophet, lest, by the continual possession of it, he should forget that it is not a natural power of his own, but a Divine gift. And thus it happens that prophets occasionally speak what is in reality only their own idea, though they imagine that they are speaking by inspiration. Yet when they know the truth, if they be true prophets, they hasten to correct any false impression they may have given to their hearers. The false prophets, on the contrary, not only speak what is false, but persist in maintaining it.[1] Gregory appears to regard the prophetic state as one of ecstasy. The prophet's mind is taken possession of by the overmastering Spirit, and the prophet himself becomes merely the Spirit's mouthpiece. "It is not the prophet who speaks, but the Holy Spirit speaks through the prophet."[2] Nevertheless, the prophet himself understands what the Spirit shows or tells him—this is an essential mark of prophecy.[3] Gregory adds that God sometimes speaks to the

[1] For the above, see *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 1, *passim.*

[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 8.

[3] *Mor.* xi. 31: "Cum enim aliquid ostenditur vel auditur, si intellectus non tribuitur, prophetia minime est. Vidit namque Pharao per somnium

prophets, not directly, but through the mediation of angels, who, though they may not appear outwardly, inspire the soul of the prophet by their inward presence, and make known the Divine will.[1]

In respect of the gift of miracles, Gregory's teaching is remarkably sane and judicious. Much as he admired the wonderful works of the saints, he yet regarded them as having value only in so far as they served to prepare for and bear witness to the greatest miracle of all—the new life imparted to men by Christ. Miracles, he says, were necessary in the beginnings of the Church to beget faith in the new doctrines. For unless men had witnessed visible wonders, they would never have been persuaded to believe in the wonders invisible. But when the highest of all miracles, and the end of all, the Divine life, had once been introduced, there was no longer need of the external sign. Thus the Apostle Paul, on an island full of unbelievers, healed the sick by prayer; but to believing Timothy he only recommended natural remedies (1 Tim. v. 23). For the former needed, by an outward display of power, to be made susceptible of the Divine life; but the latter, who was already sound within, required no outward sign.[2] So again Gregory says: "Holy Church once required the help of miracles when the tribulation of persecution oppressed her. Yet, after she has overcome the pride of disbelief, she needs no longer the signs of miracles, but the merits of deeds alone, though she displays even the former by many persons, when occasion demands. For it is written: *Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.*"[3] Therefore we need not wonder that these external signs are now less frequently vouchsafed than formerly. While the Faith was a delicate plant, it needed frequent watering; but now it is firmly rooted and vigorous, it need be watered no more. Yet, after all, the true miracle ever

quae erant Aegypto ventura; sed quia nequivit intelligere quod vidit, propheta non fuit. Aspexit Balthasar rex articulos manus scribentis in pariete; sed propheta non fuit, quia intellectum rei quam viderat non accepit. Ut igitur beatus Iob prophetiae spiritum se habere testetur, non solum vidisse se et audisse sed etiam intellexisse omnia asserit."

[1] *Mor.* xxviii. 9.

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 4, § 3; *Mor.* xxvii. 37.

[3] *Mor.* xxvii. 36.

continues; and "Holy Church daily accomplishes, after a spiritual manner, that which once she did through the Apostles after a sensible manner." This last thought Gregory works out with reference to casting out devils, the gift of tongues, holding serpents, drinking poison, and so forth, spiritually interpreted, adding: "These wonders are the greater because they are of a spiritual kind, the greater because by their means not the bodies, but the souls of men are revived. And these signs, beloved, you may work, if you will, by the power of God. The external signs do not ensure life to those who work them. For those physical miracles are sometimes evidences of holiness, but they do not constitute it; but these spiritual miracles which are wrought in the soul are not evidences of the virtue of the life, they constitute that virtue. The former even the wicked may have; the latter none but the good enjoy. . . . Crave not, then, for the miracles which one may have in common with the reprobate, but for the miracles of love and piety, which are the more sure in proportion as they are hidden, and which win the greater reward from God, inasmuch as they have the less honour among men."[1] So again, after quoting our Lord's words in Matt. vii. 22, Gregory says: "By this it is plain that the humility of love should be honoured among men, not the power of working miracles. . . . The proof of holiness is not the working of miracles, but the loving all even as we love ourselves."[2] And in his famous letter to Augustine on his miracles in England he insists upon the same point.[3] Elsewhere he urges that good works alone are the test of the good life, so that, though Peter did greater miracles than Paul, their merits are counted equal in heaven.[4] At the end of the world the moral power of faith will gain the victory over antichrist, even though his power be supported by signs and miracles.[5]

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 29, § 4. In *Dial.* iii. 17 Gregory says that it is a greater miracle to convert a sinner than to raise the dead.

[2] *Mor.* xx. 17.

[3] *Epp.* xi. 36.

[4] *Dial.* i. 12: "Vitae vera aestimatio in virtute est operum, non in ostensione signorum. Nam sunt plerique, qui etsi signa non faciunt, signa tamen facientibus dispares non sunt."

[5] *Mor.* xxxiv. 7.

Section V.—The Doctrine of Angels and Demons.

In developing his doctrine of Angels and Demons, and also of Saints, Gregory drew for his material partly on Augustine, but principally on the body of contemporary superstitions. The aggregate of crude or fanciful ideas, which had come to be associated with the Christian religion in the vulgar mind—ideas concerning the spirit-world and the after-life—was by him for the first time systematically treated. He sifted these ideas, accentuated such as seemed to him important, and expounded them dogmatically. The authority of Gregory is the principal justification of what has been called "Christianity of the second rank."

(1) *Angels.*

The Nature of Angels. In opposition to the opinion that angels are aeons or emanations from God, Gregory, like Augustine, asserts that they are creatures. Their creation, though in time preceding that of man, is closely connected with it. For angels and men are distinguished from all other creatures by the gift of reason, by being made in the likeness of God.[1] In the case of angels, however, since their nature is more subtle, the likeness is truer and more thorough.[2]

Gregory describes the angels as circumscribed or limited spirits, endowed with vast knowledge.[3] They are bounded by space, and have body of a sort. For though, as compared with the grosser constitution of man, the angelic nature is incorporeal spirit, yet in comparison with the Supreme and Incomprehensible Spirit, angels may be said to have body.[4] Their knowledge, again, if compared with ours, is immeasurably vast, for they contemplate the very source of knowledge, and in knowing God they know all that can be known. Yet in

[1] *Mor.* xxxii. 17: "Simul angelum factum hominemque cognoscimus, simul videlicet non unitate temporum sed cognitione rationis; simul per acceptam imaginem sapientiae, et non simul per coniunctam substantiam formae. In cuncta igitur creatura homo et angelus simul conditus exstitit, quia ab omni creatura irrationali distinctus processit."

[2] *Ibid.* xxxii. 47.

[3] *Ibid.* ii. 3.

[4] *Ibid.* ii. 3.

comparison with the Divine knowledge, angels know but little, for, though they unceasingly behold the Divine Nature, they cannot comprehend It or understand Its Essence.[1]

The angelic nature, being created, is of itself liable to change, otherwise the great apostasy would have been impossible. But angels had the power, if they willed to exercise it, of maintaining themselves in the good state of their creation; and to those who did so will there was given as a reward the blessing of immutability, so that they should no longer be capable of falling.[2] The good angels then were strengthened with eternal stability, being fixed in the contemplation of God, whose presence they never leave.[3] And of this contemplation they are never weary, for they both eternally behold and eternally desire to behold Him. The desire accompanies the satisfaction of the desire, and both alike are unending.[4] Angels, finally, are absolutely pure of sin.[5] Nevertheless, no angel could redeem the human race, "because it must needs be that the Creator Himself should set the creature free."[6]

The Ministry of Angels. Gregory assigns to the angels four functions. First, they govern the world in general.[7] Secondly, they regulate, assist, and champion the several nations. Gregory cites Dan. x. 13, arguing that the angel who spoke to Daniel was the guardian of the Jews of the Captivity, while Michael protected those who remained in Judaea. He adds that the angels who champion the nations never fight on behalf of those who act unjustly, but with justice judge their deeds. The only victory they desire or gain is that, in all the nations, the Supreme Will be done.[8] Thirdly, they protect and minister to individuals.[9] And lastly, they act at times as agents through whom God speaks to men and acquaints them with His will.[10] Angels transmit these Divinecommunications in various ways. Sometimes they do so by words alone, as when (in John xii. 28)

[1] *Mor.* ii. 3; ix. 26; xxvi. 19.
[2] *Ibid.* v. 68; xxv. 11; xxvii. 65; xxxiv. 13; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 18.
[3] *Mor.* ii. 3.
[4] *Ibid.* xviii. 91; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 15.
[5] *Mor.* xviii. 71.
[6] *Ibid.* xviii. 72.
[7] *Ibid.* ix. 26.
[8] *Ibid.* xvii. 17.
[9] *Ibid.* xxx. 64; [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 1, c. 15.
[10] *Mor.* iv. 55; *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 8.

a voice is heard from heaven; sometimes by things alone, as when Ezekiel was informed of the Incarnation by the appearance of amber in fire; sometimes by words and deeds together, as when Adam learned his wickedness when he *heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden*, God here being represented by an angel; sometimes by mental images, *e.g.* Jacob's ladder; sometimes by images "taken for the time from the air, and presented before the eyes of the body," as when the three angels who visited Abraham temporarily assumed bodies fashioned out of air; sometimes by heavenly substances, *e.g.* a voice from a cloud; sometimes by earthly substances, *e.g.* the voice of Balaam's ass; sometimes by both together, as when a voice came to Moses from the burning bush; sometimes by the angelic presence in the heart of man, the angel himself being manifested to the vision of the soul, though not to the eyes of the body.[1]

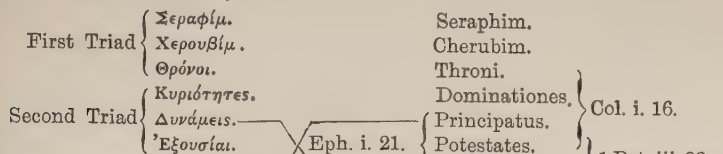
The Orders of Angels. The conception of distinction of dignity and rank is a favourite one with Gregory. Everywhere throughout the universe he found degrees and grades. He noted the grades of creation, the degrees of holiness, the distinctions of blessedness in heaven, the degrees even of damnation. Hence among the angels also he sought to discover ranks and orders, bridging the interval which separated the human creation from the Divine Creator, by an ascending series of spiritual existences.[2] Accordingly, like the Pseudo-Dionysius—whose work, however, he had not read[3]—Gregory understood the nine Biblical names as representing nine orders of angels; which orders he brings into connexion with the nine precious stones mentioned by the Prophet Ezekiel (xxviii. 13).[4] But Gregory's arrangement of these orders differs slightly from that of Dionysius, as will appear from the following table:—

[1] *Mor.* xxviii. 3–9.

[2] *Ibid.* iv. 55: "Ex rebus insensibilibus discimus quid de sensibilibus atque intelligibilibus sentiamus. Terra namque aere fecundatur, aer autem ex coeli qualitate disponitur. Sic iumentis homines, hominibus angeli, archangeli vero angelis praesunt." Cf. *Mor.* xxviii. 9; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 20.

[3] Gregory says, *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 12: "*Fertur* Dionysius Areopagita . . . dicere."

[4] *Mor.* xxxii. 48; *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 7.



It is interesting to note that, of these two schemes (which differ only in the position of the Virtues), the former was adopted by the majority of Scholastic writers as being more reasoned than the classification of Gregory.[3] The general opinion of the Middle Ages is expressed by Dante, who says that Gregory, when admitted to the sight of the angelic host in heaven, smiled to find how mistaken he had been :—

"E Dionisio con tanto disio
A contemplar questi ordini si mise,
Che li nomò e distinse, com'io.
Ma Gregorio da lui poi si divise :
Onde sì tosto, come gli occhi aperse
In questo ciel, di se medesmo rise." [4]

The functions of the several orders Gregory describes as follows. The angels are the spirits who carry to men messages of minor importance: the archangels are those who bear messages of the highest importance. Thus it was that the conception and birth of the Saviour was foretold to Mary, not by an angel, but by an archangel. The spirits of the latter

[1] Dionys. Areopag. *De Coelesti Hierarchia* c. 6–9 (Migne *P. G.* iii.).

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 7. This is Gregory's final and deliberate arrangement. In *Mor.* xxxii. 48 another order is given : angeli, archangeli, throni, dominationes, virtutes, principatus, potestates, cherubim, seraphim. Only the first two and the last two members of this series occupy the positions assigned them in the final scheme. But it seems probable that in *Mor.* xxxii. 48 Gregory was not intending a definite arrangement of ranks, but was merely making a rough enumeration.

[3] Thom. Aquinas *Summa* I. qu. 108, art. 5, says: "Dionysius exponit ordinum nomina secundum convenientiam ad spirituales perfectiones eorum; Gregorius vero in expositione horum nominum magis attendere videtur exteriora ministeria." For a useful note on the orders of angels, see F. E. Brightman *The Preces Privatae of Lancelot Andrewes* pp. 314, 315.

[4] Dante *Paradiso* xxviii.

class possess names, which serve not so much to identify the archangels themselves, as to distinguish the particular functions which they discharge in reference to men or to the other angels. Thus the names Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael indicate the kind of operation peculiar to those spirits. The next class, Virtues, are the spirits through whom signs and miracles are generally wrought; Powers are they who have authority to hold in check hostile Virtues, and prevent their tempting the hearts of men as much as they would; Principalities preside also over the good Angels, and govern them for the due performance of their appointed duties. The Principalities, however, are only "primi inter pares," and they have no despotic authority over the other spirits. That is reserved for the Dominations, who far transcend the Principalities in the absoluteness of their sway over the rest, all alike being subject and obedient to them. Thrones are those spirits through whom God executes His judgments. Cherubim signify "plenitude of knowledge." They are the spirits who, from their nearness to God, are endowed with such vast knowledge that, so far as it is possible for a creature, they know all things perfectly. Seraphim are the nearest of all to God, and, through their unique position, burn ever with intense and flaming love of Him.[1]

Gregory is inclined to adopt the opinion of the Pseudo-Dionysius, that only the lower spirits—angels and archangels—come forth to minister to men. Quoting Dan. vii. 10, he draws a distinction between "ministering to God" and "standing before God," and thinks that while angels and archangels "minister" in the sense of doing God's errands with mankind, the higher ranks "stand before Him" only, enjoying eternally the beatific vision, and never going forth from His immediate presence.[2] From lack of certain evidence on this subject, however, Gregory refused to commit himself to a dogmatic statement, or definitely to interpret the Scriptural allusions to the ministry of Cherubim and Seraphim in the sense of ministration through the agency of subordinate spirits.[3] He contents himself with drawing attention to two points. The first is that lower spirits are sent on missions by higher spirits, as is proved from the words of Zechariah (ii. 3, 4).[4] The second is

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, §§ 8–10.
[2] *Ibid.* 34, § 12.
[3] *Ibid.* 34, § 13.
[4] *Ibid.* 34, § 13; *Mor.* iv. 55.

that even when the spirits, that are sent, outwardly come to us, yet inwardly, through the power of contemplation, they never depart from God. Thus they both "minister to God" and "stand before Him"; for though they are limited, God is infinite, so that whithersoever they are sent, they move and go in Him. Thus they go forth without withdrawing from God's presence, and they return again to Him from whom they have never for one moment departed.[1]

While Gregory lays stress on the distinction of the angelic orders, and assigns to each its functions and privileges, he at the same time asserts that these privileges are not the exclusive possession of each several order, but are to some extent shared by all. Thus all know God, though the Cherubim know Him more perfectly; all love God, but the Seraphim with greatest ardour; over all God presides, but more particularly over the Thrones. Each order thus is characterized by that which it has in a greater degree than the others; but all, to a greater or lesser extent, share the characteristics of each. Even the special authority of the Dominations and Principalities is shared by all through love. Hence the names of the orders refer, not to things exclusively possessed by one or another, but to what, possessed by all, is yet possessed by some in a fuller degree and in a more special manner.[2]

The Number of the Angels. The number of the Angels may be represented both as infinite and as definite. For though no man could possibly count the host of heaven, yet God can do so. Therefore the number of the angels, infinite relatively to man, is definite for the knowledge of God. Those spirits who "minister to God" are more numerous than those who "stand before Him."[3] The original number of the angels, which was diminished by Satan's apostasy, will be restored at the end of the world, when the places left vacant in the several orders by the fallen angels will be filled up by the redeemed of mankind. "The broken number of the angels the Mediator came to restore, that by the redemption of the human race He might repair the losses of the angels, and perhaps might heap up yet more richly the measure of the heavenly fatherland."[4] The

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 13; *Mor.* ii. 3.

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 14.

[3] *Mor.* xvii. 18.

[4] *Mor.* xxxi. 99; cf. *ibid.* xvii. 19; xxviii. 34; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 2, § 15; *Hom. in Ev.* 21, § 2; 34, § 11.

view, developed later by Anselm, that the filling up of this deficiency was the cause of the creation of man, was apparently accepted by Gregory.[1]

The Adoration of Angels. Gregory taught that since the Incarnation man is no longer inferior to the angels, but is equal to them. Hence it is no longer fitting that adoration should be offered. Before the Incarnation, indeed, men did adore angels, and were not forbidden to do so. Gregory quotes as instances Lot (Gen. xix. 1) and Joshua (Josh. v. 15). But under the new dispensation this homage is forbidden, and when St. John wished to adore an angel he was prevented by the words: *See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren.* The reason of the change is that, before the coming of Christ, the angels justly despised mankind, sunk in corruption and unredeemed, and therefore suffered themselves to be adored; but after the Incarnation they could no longer despise that human nature which, in their Maker, they beheld exalted above themselves.[2] Thus, instead of the Church adoring the angels, "since Christ came and poured upon His faithful ones the spirit of liberty, the Church is honoured even by the angels themselves."[3]

(2) *Demons and the Devil.*

Demons are angels who rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven. Gregory, after Augustine, attributes the cause of their fall to pride. "Almighty God made two creations to contemplate Himself—the angelic and the human; but pride smote both and dashed them down from their state of original righteousness." The fall of the angels, however, was the greater, inasmuch as they had no infirmity derived from the flesh, and their wickedness was of their own devising, and was not suggested to them by another. Therefore the fallen angels have no opportunity of amendment or hope of pardon, and they can never be finally redeemed.[4] Here Gregory accepts the opinion of Augustine, rejecting the doctrine of Origen.[5]

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 6.
[2] *Mor.* xxvii. 29; *Hom. in Ev.* 8, § 2.
[3] [Greg.] *Super Cantica Canticorum* viii. 1.
[4] *Mor.* iv. 8.
[5] [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 4, cc. 33, 34.

These evil spirits wander about in the aerial heaven, consumed with envy when they see the souls of men mount up into the ethereal heaven from which they themselves are for ever banished.[1] Hence they endeavour to hinder man's progression by kindling lust in the heart, and stirring up temptations.[2] Yet even this evil work they do by God's permission, and in serving their own unjust ends they fulfil His just decrees. In punishing the reprobate and testing the good by temptation so as to increase their merits, they are carrying out the purposes of God and making His will to be done.[3]

The Devil is the prince of the demons. As originally created,[4] he was pre-eminent among all the angels, the first of all the creatures, incomparably great and beautiful and wise.[5] He was made naturally good, and capable at once of loving and fearing God; not with the slavish fear which a servant has for his master, but with the "fearless fear" of a loving wife for her husband. From this condition, however, Satan fell through pride. He envied God's greatness, and desired to be great himself, not by participation in God's greatness, but absolutely. But in casting away the free service of God (*libera servitus*), Satan only gained a liberty which was slavery (*captiva libertas*). The very absence of restraint became a restraint to him. And, because he was not willing to fear God, he was hardened into a fearless insensibility which subjected him to frightful punishment, which, not fearing, he was unable to avoid. Thus he who might have possessed all things by fearing God, obtained, through his fearlessness, that he should suffer all things.[6]

The result of his apostasy is that the devil, who was once preeminent among the angels, is now fallen beneath their authority. By them his malice is now restrained; by them at the end of the world he will be let loose for a while to rage as antichrist; and by them, after the judgment, he will be cast into the lowest depth of hell.[7] For at the present time the devil

[1] *Mor.* ii. 74.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 74; xxvii. 49.
[3] *Ibid.* ii. 38; xiv. 46; xvi. 47; xxxiii. 41.
[4] *Ibid.* xxxii. 17: "Manichaei dogma reprehenditur, qui dum duo principia loquitur, tenebrarum gentem non factam asserere conatur."
[5] *Ibid.* xxxii. 47, 48.
[6] *Ibid.* xxxiv. 40, 41; xxix. 18.
[7] *Ibid.* iv. 16.

does not suffer his full punishment, but only a foretaste of it. Now he experiences the darkness of error, which will never be lightened by any glimmer of repentance, or any recollection of God's regard, or any prospect of pardon; hereafter there will be added the eternal torments of hell.[1]

The devil's power, nevertheless, is still terrible. For though he has lost his happiness, he still retains the greatness of his angelic nature,[2] the subtlety of which is more than a match for human faculties. Thus he compassed the downfall of Adam by promising him a divine nature[3]; and he wars against the descendants of Adam with extraordinary skill, tempting them especially to the three sins of lust, malice, and pride.[4] Nevertheless, his power is restrained by God, so that he cannot do all that he would, or, indeed, anything at all without Divine permission. He dare not enter unbidden even into a herd of swine, much less can he venture to injure men who are made in the likeness of God.[5] Hence those of the elect whom he is allowed to assault are enabled by God's grace to repel him. Mere dust, in humble reliance on the Creator, can meet and conquer the proud archangel.[6]

At the end of the world Satan will be released for a time from his restraint, and will become incarnate in the person of antichrist.[7] His power will be enormous,[8] for he will surpass all, not only in worldly glory,[9] but also in the working of miracles and wonders.[10] Then he will rage against the elect, torturing their bodies with terrible persecutions, and shaking their souls with amazing miracles. This will be the sorest trial of all. "Consider," says Gregory, "to what temptation the mind of man will be exposed, when the holy martyr submits his body to tortures, and yet his tormentor works miracles before his eyes. Whose resolution would not utterly be shaken, when

[1] *Ibid.* iv. 10.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 4; xxxiv. 39.
[3] *Ibid.* iv. 15; xxxiii. 17.
[4] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 30.
[5] *Ibid.* xxxii. 50; cf. ii. 17; xvi. 47; xviii. 4; xxxiii. 28.
[6] *Ibid.* xxxii. 51.
[7] *Ibid.* xiii. 13. Gregory describes antichrist as "damnatus ille homo, quem in fine mundi apostata angelus assumet." Cf. *ibid.* xiv. 25: "Diabolus, in ultimis temporibus, illud vas perditionis ingressus, antichristus vocabitur." Cf. *ibid.* xxxii. 22; xxxiv. 7.
[8] *Ibid.* xxxiv. 2: "Omne quod nequiter vult, hoc ad tempus exsequi etiam fortiter potest."
[9] *Ibid.* xiv. 25.
[10] *Ibid.* xxxii. 22.

he who tortures with scourges glitters also with miracles?"[1] Hence even the righteous, who cannot be intimidated by the violence and power of antichrist, will be sometimes deceived by his miracles. For how can they know his falseness when he corroborates all his lies with signs, and supports every word with wonders?[2] At the same time, too, by the awful dispensation of God, the signs of power will have been withdrawn from the Church. "For prophecy is hidden, the grace of healings is taken away, the power of prolonged abstinence is weakened, the words of doctrine are silent, the prodigies of miracles are removed. And though the heavenly dispensation does not entirely withdraw them, yet it does not manifest them openly and in manifold ways as in former days."[3] Thus antichrist will prosper exceedingly, and his fame will spread throughout the world, and he will found a Church of the reprobate, who are members of him, just as the elect are members of Christ.[4] And he will torture and massacre the elect—not only those of his own time, but also Enoch and Elias, who will return into the world to suffer at his hand. Yet those who are really elect will not fall.[5]

The days of antichrist will usher in the end. Then the Judge will appear, and Satan "will be smitten with eternal death, not in battle with the angels, not in contest with the saints, but through the coming of the Judge, by the breath of His mouth alone."[6] There will be a great spectacle. All the legions of angels and all the company of the elect will be assembled to gaze upon the monster brought captive into their midst.[7] And lastly, he with his whole body, the reprobate, will be cast down into hell, to be tortured with its fires for all eternity,[8] without hope of remission or pardon.[9]

It should be noticed that Gregory's *Dialogues* have a peculiar interest in this connexion, because in them we meet, for the first time, with the fully developed conception of the mediaeval devil. Here Satan is represented, no longer as the portentous power of darkness, but as a spirit of petty malice, more irritating than awful, playing all manner of mischievous

[1] *Mor.* xxxii. 24.
[2] *Ibid.* xxxii. 25, 26.
[3] *Ibid.* xxxiv. 7.
[4] *Ibid.* xii. 48; xxxiv. 8.
[5] *Ibid.* xiv. 27.
[6] *Ibid.* xxxii. 27.
[7] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 37.
[8] *Dial.* iv. 29.
[9] *Mor.* iv. 8, 9; xxxii. 47.

pranks and doing at times serious damage, but easily routed by a sprinkling of holy water or the sign of the cross. The devil of Gregory's *Dialogues* is, in all essential respects, the same as he who flung a stone at Dominic and got spattered with Luther's ink. He is represented at one time as making his appearance all on fire with flaming mouth and flashing eyes, yet condescending to make a pun on the name of a saint[1]; at another time, disguised as a physician, carrying horn and mortar, and riding on a mule[2]; again, under the form of a little black boy,[3] or a bird with flapping wings.[4] He haunts a house in Corinth, rendering it uninhabitable through his imitations of "the roaring of lions, the bleating of sheep, the braying of asses, the hissing of serpents, the grunting of hogs, and the squeaking of rats."[5] He begins to strip off the stockings of a priest, who had rudely ordered his servant to do so, calling him "devil."[6] He holds his court in a ruined temple of Apollo on the Appian Way, and there reviews his demons at midnight, and receives their report of the mischief they have accomplished in the day.[7] He lives for three years, under the form of a serpent, in the cave of a holy hermit of Campania.[8] In such representations as these the devil has lost much of his terror, and has become comparatively innocuous. He is already the cunning impostor, full of tricks and devices, with whom the Middle Ages were familiar. And his attendant demons have undergone a similar transformation. Gregory tells us, for instance, of one fallen angel, who, while sitting on a lettuce, was inadvertently eaten by a nun[9]; and of another who, to injure a bishop, assumed the form of a stranger, and cried about the streets that the bishop had denied him hospitality.[10] These demons have the right of entering into human beings and taking possession of them on the occasion even of quite slight faults; such, for example, as the disregard of an ecclesiastical regulation of ceremonial purity.[11] Certain saints are credited with peculiar powers for their expulsion in such cases.[12] Wizards and witches, on the other hand, are believed to have traffic with them,[13] and the doctrine

[1] *Dial.* ii. 8. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 30. [3] *Ibid.* ii. 4.
[4] *Ibid.* ii. 2. [5] *Ibid.* iii. 4. [6] *Ibid.* iii. 20.
[7] *Ibid.* iii. 7. [8] *Ibid.* iii. 16. [9] *Ibid.* i. 4.
[10] *Ibid.* i. 10. [11] *Ibid.* i. 10. [12] *Ibid.* i. 10.
[13] *Ibid.* i. 4, 10; *Epp.* v. 32; xi. 33.

of demoniacal agency already bore tragic fruit in the burning and maltreatment of the supposed sorcerers.[1]

On the whole, Gregory's most important contribution to the science of demonology is the collection of stories in the *Dialogues*. The popularity of this work, and the frequent use which mediaeval preachers made of the anecdotes contained in it, must have contributed in no slight degree to make Gregory's opinions permanent, and to fix them fast in the religious consciousness of the people. At any rate, the conception of the devil-world, which for centuries prevailed in the Church, was substantially the same as that of Gregory.

Section VI.—The Doctrine of Saints.

The encouragement given by Gregory to the cultus of saints has already been referred to in the earlier chapters of this book. Here I need only allude to his teaching on invocation. From the Nicene age onwards, of course, it had been the custom of Catholics to commend themselves to the protection of the saints and martyrs. Although protests had been heard from time to time, the orthodox Church teachers were agreed in regarding departed saints as "patrons," "advocates," and "intercessors with God," who could assist the living by their prayers and work miracles. Such was the view of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine, and indeed of the Church in general. Hence Gregory deals with the invocation of saints as an undisputed and thoroughly established principle of Christianity, and endeavours only to quicken the zeal of his people for the custom by fervent appeals and recitations of miracles and visions. Thus in a sermon preached on the festival of SS. Processus and Martinian, he exclaims: "Make these saints, beloved, your patrons in your trial before the severe Judge; take these as your defenders in the day of the awful terror. If you had any case to be discussed to-morrow before some great judge, surely you would spend the whole day in thinking about it, you would seek some patron, you would earnestly entreat him to defend you before so great a judge. Behold, the severe Judge, Jesus, is coming! There is before us the terror of that mighty

[1] *Dial.* i. 4; *Epp.* xi. 33.

assembly of angels and archangels. In that assembly our case will be tried. And yet we are not looking out for patrons to defend us. But the holy martyrs are here ready to be our defenders. They wish to be asked; I may say, they beg us to beg of them. Seek, then, these to support your prayer; fly to these to protect you in your guilt; for the Judge Himself wills to be entreated that He may not punish sinners."[1] "They who have no confidence in anything that they do," he writes elsewhere, "fly to the protection of the holy martyrs, and beside their sacred bodies weep continuously and pray that they may merit pardon through their intercessions."[2] This teaching Gregory enforces by anecdotes. He says, for instance, that SS. Processus and Martinian appeared to a woman, and promised to do "what they could" for her in the Day of Judgment.[3] Another story relates that, when the Lombards invaded Valeria, the monks fled to the tomb of St. Equitius, in St. Lawrence's Church. When the enemy burst in upon them there, one of the monks called upon the saint to defend his servants, whereupon an unclean spirit seized the Lombards, and the monks escaped.[4] A third tells how a monk obtained a longed-for death by the intercession of a saint.[5] In a letter to a lady who had sent some veils to cover the shrine of St. Peter, Gregory says: "I trust that he, whose body you have covered on earth, may by his intercession protect you in heaven from all your sins, and rule all your household with his care, and with his watchfulness guard it."[6]

At the same time, while Gregory recommends the invocation of saints, and teaches the efficacy of their intercession to avert trouble or secure blessings both in this life and the next, he is careful to guard against misconception in respect of the power and personality of the saints themselves. "With whatever brightness and transparency the saints may shine, it is yet one thing for men to be wise in God, and another thing for Man to be the Wisdom of God. Which same

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 32, § 8.

[2] *Mor.* xvi. 64.

[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 32, § 7. Contrast with this Gregory's statement, *ibid.* 12, § 3: "In illo die sibimetipsi testimonium uniuscuiusque vix sufficit; quanto minus et sibi et proximo."

[4] *Dial.* i. 4.

[5] *Ibid.* i. 8.

[6] *Epp.* xi. 26; cf. *ibid.* xiii. 42.

Wisdom he was truly acquainted with, who never ventured to liken any one of the saints to the Mediator between God and man. . . . For the elect both venerate the life of the saints for its sublimity, and yet do not receive it erroneously. For those whom they know to be mere men they do not at all compare with the God-Man. . . . For the saints above are indeed holy and righteous, but by participation in Wisdom, not by comparison with It. . . . So, then, it is after one sort that the Light lighting is to be reverenced, after another the light lighted: in one way the Righteousness that maketh righteous, in another way the righteousness that is made righteous."[1] Holding these views, Gregory never teaches, like his namesake of Tours,[2] that the invocation of saints is a necessary part of a Christian's duty, or that their assistance is in any sense indispensable for salvation. Rather his doctrine seems to be in general accord with that approved by the Council of Trent—that the saints reigning with Christ offer their prayers to God for man, and that it is "a good and useful practice" to invoke their prayers, assistance, and protection.

Moreover, while Gregory recounts many instances of temporal benefits procured by invocation of the saints or by prayers directed to God at their tombs, he nevertheless denounces the prayers which seek solely or chiefly for the blessings of this life. In an eloquent sermon delivered on the festival of St. Pancras in his church, he said: "Behold, how many of you have come to the martyr's feast, bowing the knee, and beating your breasts, and uttering words of prayer and confession, and moistening your cheeks with tears. But ponder, I beseech you, the character of your prayers: consider whether you pray in the name of Jesus, that is, whether you pray for the joys of eternal bliss. For in the house of Jesus you seek not Jesus, if in the temple of eternity you make urgent prayer for temporal things. Behold, one seeks in his prayer a wife, another longs for an estate, another for clothing, another for means of subsistence. And it is true that, even for these things, if they be lacking, men must ask Almighty God. But in so doing we should ever be mindful of that which we have

[1] *Mor.* xviii. 79–82.

[2] The following passages in Gregory of Tours are important in this connexion: *Mirac.* i. 107; ii. 50; *De Mirac. S. Martini*, ii. 60; iv. Praef.

learned from the precept of our Saviour: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* It is no error, then, to pray to Jesus even for these things, if we do not ask for them too earnestly. But there are some who are more guilty, who pray for the death of an enemy, who persecute with prayer one whom they cannot persecute with the sword. The man who is prayed against may continue to live, yet he who prays against him incurs the murderer's guilt. . . . Whoever, therefore, prays thus, fights in his very prayers against the will of his Creator: his prayer itself is sin."[1]

In connexion with the invocation of saints a philosophical question had arisen, which had engaged the attention of Jerome and puzzled Augustine. How, it was asked, can the saints, who are finite beings, hear the prayers that are addressed to them in many places at once? Jerome solved the difficulty by ascribing to the saints a kind of omnipresence: "If the Lamb is everywhere, then we must believe that they also, who are with the Lamb, are everywhere." Augustine, rejecting this hypothesis, suggests that the saints may get their knowledge through the omniscience of God or through the ministry of angels, but he frankly confesses himself unable to solve the problem satisfactorily. Gregory, for his part, teaches that the saints in heaven know all things through beholding God. "Those who see the brightness of their Creator are able to see all things that are done in creation."[2] "Inasmuch as holy souls behold the brightness of Almighty God within, we cannot for a moment suppose that there is anything without that they know not."[3] "Because in heaven they do all behold God in the brightness that is shed on all, what is there that they know not, since they know Him who knoweth all things?"[4]

It may be remarked here that Gregory nowhere enjoins that any special veneration should be paid to the Virgin Mary. Indeed, he only once refers to the invocation of Mary, when he relates a story of a bishop who prayed to her, and received, in answer to his prayer, a miraculous gift of twelve gold solidi, "as bright as if they had just come from the mint."[5] In this

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 27, § 7.
[2] *Ibid.* 40, § 8.
[3] *Mor.* xii. 26.
[4] *Dial.* iv. 33.
[5] *Dial.* i. 9. A vision of the Mother of God is related *ibid.* iv. 17. The author of *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* i. 1, c. 5, writes: "Altitudo Mariae supra omnes sanctos refulsit."

reticence the *Dialogues* present a marked contrast with the mediaeval collections of legends. But even as compared with the writers nearer his own time, Gregory is curiously modest in the claims he puts forward on behalf of the Mother of God. Although he must have known Augustine's opinion that the Virgin Mary was without actual sin, yet he never refers to it or adopts it as his own. On the contrary, he implicitly rejects it by emphasizing the sinfulness of all human beings, even the holiest, with the single exception of Christ Himself. Again, he is silent respecting the legend of the Virgin's departure, which is found in Gregory of Tours. Of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, I need scarcely remark, he knows nothing. Christ alone, he says, was conceived without sin.[1] The perpetual virginity of Mary, however, is, of course, maintained.[2]

[1] *Mor.* xi. 70; xviii. 84; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 17.

[2] *Mor.* xxiv. 3; xviii. 85; *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 1; 38, § 3; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* v. 27.

PART II

GREGORY'S DOCTRINE OF MAN AND THE MEANS OF GRACE

GREGORY'S doctrine of Man and the Means of Grace is derived mainly from Augustine and the popular religion. His views on Original Righteousness, the Fallen State, Grace, and Predestination, are semi-Augustinian. His doctrine of the Church is taken entirely from Augustine. His statements on the Eucharist, on Penance and Purgatory, and on the Last Things, are the result of a deliberate attempt to formulate the opinions current in the Roman Church at this time. The manner in which Gregory deals with these opinions, fixing floating belief and giving it definite expression, is particularly worthy of attention. It was, perhaps, this portion of his work that was most important for the development of the doctrine of the future.

The whole subject will here be considered under the following headings:—

(1) The doctrine of Man.
(2) The doctrine of Grace.
(3) The doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments.
(4) The doctrine of Penance and Purgatory.
(5) The doctrine of the Last Things.
(6) The doctrine of Faith, Love, and Good Works.

SECTION I.—THE DOCTRINE OF MAN.

The Constitution of Man. Gregory adopts the old division of man into soul and body. The essence of the first is "spiritus," the essence of the second is "limus"—two diverse substances which are so wonderfully combined in man, that

when the flesh suffers the spirit droops, and when the spirit is afflicted the flesh suffers with it.[1] Yet the soul and body are antagonistic. For the soul, being rational, is the strength of man; while the flesh is his weakness. The latter drags down the former and hinders it in its upward endeavours, so that, between the two, the life of man is a state of constant internal conflict.[2] Nevertheless, says Gregory, it is untrue to assert with the Manichaeans, that the soul and the flesh proceed from two opposing principles, God and Satan. Both alike were made by the Creator of Good.[3]

The soul is the life and governing principle of the body, feeling each affection of the body at the point where the affection takes place, without being obliged to move itself to that point; it is wholly and indivisibly present, both in the entire body and in every part of it.[4] The soul is one and simple; yet Gregory distinguishes it in three "qualities"—mens, anima, and virtus.[5] It is rational, and therefore immortal.[6] For though it can cease to exist in blessedness (*beate vivere*), it can never cease to exist essentially (*essentialiter vivere*), even in the state of damnation and everlasting death.[7] With regard to its origin, Gregory refuses to commit himself either to the Traducian or to the Creationist theory, though his doctrine of original sin inclined him towards the former.[8] The function of the body, on the other hand, is to be "the organ of the soul,"[9] serving it through the five senses.[10] In the body itself are distinguished four "qualities" or properties—hot and cold, moist and dry.[11]

Man, thus consisting of soul and body, is a microcosm. "When God created man He gathered together into a small compass, as it were, another world—a world of reason."[12] This little world bears a likeness to the greater universe, and participates in all its various forms of existence. "Man has it in common with the stones to be, with the trees to live, with

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, § 9.
[2] *Mor.* iv. 68; viii. 50; xiv. 17.
[3] *Mor.* ix. 74.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, § 9.
[5] *Mor.* xxxv. 42.
[6] *Mor.* xiv. 17.
[7] *Dial.* iv. 45: "Anima et mortalis esse intelligitur et immortalis. Mortalis quippe, quia beate vivere amittit; immortalis autem, quia essentialiter vivere nunquam desinit, et naturae suae vitam perdere non valet, nec cum in perpetua fuerit morte damnata." Cf. *Epp.* vi. 14; vii. 31.
[8] *Epp.* ix. 147.
[9] *Epp.* v. 53*a*, § 5.
[10] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, § 5.
[11] *Mor.* xxxv. 42.
[12] *Ibid.* vi. 18.

the animals to feel, with the angels to discern."[1] But as a rational being man surpasses in dignity all creatures not endowed with reason,[2] and he was framed, not merely, as the other creatures, by God's command, but by His special counsel.[3] Man was made "after the Image and Likeness of his Maker"[4]; and Gregory implicitly recognizes the distinction between "imago" (that which belongs to the essence of man, consisting in reason and free will) and "similitudo" (actual conformity with the will of God), when he recognizes the "imago" as subsisting in fallen man,[5] but teaches that the "similitudo" was lost by sin.[6] This distinction, however, is not explicitly drawn out, nor is it adhered to with consistency.

The Original State of Man. In his views respecting the original state—which he alludes to under the terms "justitia" and "innocentia"—Gregory closely follows Augustine. He distinguishes the original state from the fallen state of man in four particulars.

(*a*) In the first place, man, as originally created, was endowed not only with immortality of soul, but also with potential immortality of body. That is to say, he was so created that if he sinned he could die, but, if he obeyed the commandment of God he could pass, without the death of the flesh, to that state of blessedness in which he could neither sin nor die. Thus, but for the Fall, man might, without dying, have attained to that place to which the redeemed are now brought after they have suffered death.[7]

(*b*) In the second place, man, as originally created, was endowed with a marvellous "stability," both physical and mental. Had he not sinned, his life would have been infinitely extended in time, without being brought to an end.[8] There would have been for him no passing from one phase of existence to another. He would have known nothing of the vicissitudes of infancy, youth, manhood, or old age[9]; or of the physical alternations of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, health and disease.[10] And to this outward stability an inward would have corresponded, so that he would never have experienced the torments of fear

[1] *Mor.* vi. 20; *Hom. in Ev.* 29, § 2.
[2] *Mor.* xxv. 1.
[3] *Ibid.* ix. 75.
[4] *Ibid.* xxx. 56.
[5] *Ibid.* ix. 75.
[6] *Ibid.* xxix. 21.
[7] *Ibid.* iv. 54.
[8] *Ibid.* ix. 50; xxv. 4.
[9] *Ibid.* xi. 68.
[10] *Ibid.* viii. 53; xiii. 36.

and hope, the fits of passion and desire, and all the attractions and revulsions from which he at present suffers.[1] His state would have been a perfectly adjusted and abiding equilibrium; a harmony of all faculties of mind and body undisturbed by any form of craving desire, even by the lawful appetites, *e.g.* of hunger and thirst.[2]

(*c*) Thirdly, man as originally created, possessed the power of contemplating his Creator. He shared with the angels the vision of God, and rejoiced "in the light of the invisible." He had clear perception of the things of the Spirit; and, knowing God, he knew himself and all things else, in Him.[3]

(*d*) Lastly, man, in his original creation, had a real power of self-determination. To use Augustine's phrase, he possessed both "posse peccare" and "posse non peccare"—a real liberty of indifference. Had he so willed he might have repelled the temptation of the devil and submitted himself in perfect obedience to God.[4] And he might have done this easily, for as yet he had suffered no disruption of his nature.[5] He knew nothing of concupiscence: there was no war between flesh and spirit[6]; the body, obedient to the soul, might have become spiritualized.[7] Hence it would have been a matter of no great difficulty to conquer temptation,[8] and, had man willed so to do, he would in the end have reached a condition in which to sin would have become impossible.[9]

[1] *Mor.* viii. 19, 54; xi. 68.

[2] *Ibid.* xiii. 36: "Aestu et frigore, fame sitique turbari, morbis affici, quandoque etiam exstingui, quid sunt haec aliud quam flagella peccati?"

[3] *Ibid.* viii. 34: "Ad contemplandum Creatorem homo conditus fuerat, ut eius semper speciem quaereret, atque in solemnitate illius amoris habitaret." Cf. *Mor.* v. 61; viii. 19; ix. 50; xi. 58, 59; *Dial.* iv. 1.

[4] *Mor.* viii. 52; *Reg. Past.* iii. 28.

[5] *Mor.* iv. 54.

[6] [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* vi. 2, c. 38: "Ante peccatum primi hominis nulla membris libido inerat. Erat quippe sensus carnis, sed turpis ac libidinosus non erat; sed statim ut ad culpam cecidit, pruritum membrorum sensit; quia obedientem motum carnis habere non potuit, quando ipse Deo inobediens fuit. Culpa ergo originalis mater contumeliosi sensus carnis recte intelligitur, quia ex illa nascendo prodit, qui esse ab illa coepit."

[7] *Mor.* v. 61: "Homo, qui si praeceptum servare voluisset, etiam carne spiritalis futurus erat, peccando factus est etiam mente carnalis."

[8] *Ibid.* xxxv. 43: "Si stare sicut est conditus vellet, hostem extra positum vincere sine difficultate potuisset."

[9] *Ibid.* iv. 54.

Such was the original state as conceived by Augustine and represented by Gregory. It was a condition of incorruption—of freedom from death, from mutability, from ignorance, and from the bondage of the will in sin. Still, it was a state, not of absolute, but of relative perfection. Man was created upright, but his goodness was capable of increase and development, and the temptation in Paradise might have been the means whereby he might have risen to a higher spiritual level.[1] His deliberate choice of evil, however, worked his ruin.

The question which in later times occupied the attention of the Schoolmen, whether the original righteousness by which man was enabled to hold communion with God, was natural or supernatural, does not seem to have occurred to Gregory. We may, perhaps, detect a trace of the doctrine of the "donum superadditum" in the following passage: "The human creature," says Gregory, "from the very fact that he is a creature, has it inherent in him to sink down below himself. But to man it has been granted by his Creator, that he should be caught above himself by the power of contemplation, and held fast in incorruption."[2] Here there seems to be indication of a distinction between a "donum superadditum" and the "pura naturalia"—a suggestion that, in addition to the natural powers, a supernatural "adjutorium" was needed. If, however, Gregory held this view, he, of course, also believed that man possessed this "donum" from the moment of his creation, so that before the Fall he was never actually in a state of "pura naturalia." In other words, the distinction between the "donum superadditum" and the "pura naturalia" was purely abstract. The former was given coincidently with the latter. It is doubtful, however, whether Gregory recognized this distinction at all. Certainly he never grasped it with clearness.

The question why God created man capable of falling and perishing, instead of making him so that he could not fall, Gregory refuses absolutely to consider. "When the mind silently asks such questions, it fears lest by its very audacity in questioning it should break out into pride, and it restrains itself with humility and keeps down its thoughts."[3]

The Fall. In his teaching about the Fall, Gregory accepts in its most literal sense the Mosaic account, and makes no attempt,

[1] *Mor.* xxxv. 29. [2] *Ibid.* xii. 19. [3] *Ibid.* ix. 51.

like Augustine, to reconcile a mystical with an historical interpretation. The devil, he says, finding our first parents immortal in Paradise, tempted them to sin by promising them divinity, and thus, by offering to immortal creatures what they had not, he craftily robbed them of what they had.[1] He tempted them in three ways—with appetite, when he persuaded them to eat the forbidden food; with vain-glory, when he said, *Ye shall be as gods;* with avarice, or lust of power, when he promised them knowledge of good and evil.[2] And the first sin, like all subsequent sins, was consummated by means of four things, namely, suggestion, pleasure, consent, and boldness in defence of the deed. For the devil suggested, Eve was pleased, Adam yielded consent, and afterwards boldly refused to acknowledge his sin.[3] The first man, though he had the power to resist temptation had he so willed, yielded voluntarily; and by that act delivered himself over to the devil, who acquired a just power over him. "For the devil, by overthrowing us in the root of our first parent, rightfully, as it were, held man in thrall; since man, being created with free will, yielded consent to him when he prompted what was evil. Being created to life in the freedom of his own will, man became of his own accord a debtor to death."[4] After Augustine, Gregory imputes the cause of the Fall to pride, which led to disobedience.[5] Adam desired to become like God, not by righteousness, but by power,[6] and therefore disdained to obey God's commandments. A subordinate cause was sensuality (the lust after the forbidden food).[7] The result of the Fall was that man lost the "status rectitudinis," the Likeness of God imprinted on him at his creation,[8] and exchanged a state of righteousness for a state of sin and corruption.[9]

[1] *Mor.* iv. 15.
[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 2.
[3] *Mor.* iv. 49; *Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 1; *Epp.* xi. 56*a*; *Reg. Past.* iii. 29.
[4] *Mor.* xvii. 46.
[5] *Ibid.* viii. 52; xiv. 19; [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* v. 2, 14.
[6] *Ibid.* xxix. 18.
[7] *Ibid.* ix. 50.
[8] *Hom. in Ev.* 31, § 2; cf. *Mor.* xxix. 21; [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 3, 25.
[9] *Mor.* viii. 22: "Soliditatem ingenitam voluntarie homo deseruit, et sese in corruptionis voraginem mersit; unde nunc vel per immunda opera labitur, vel per cogitationes illicitas foedatur. Ut enim ita dixerim, culpae suae poenaliter subdita, ipsa iam natura nostra facta est extra naturam; et remissa usque ad perversa opera ducitur, restricta autem perversorum operum importuna cogitatione fuscatur."

The Consequences of the Fall. The consequences of the Fall are developed by Gregory with some fulness. He shows how man ceased to possess the four great characteristics of his original creation. (*a*) In the first place, he lost his immortality. He was condemned to the death of the body; and because in his pride he forgot that he was formed of base clay, he was punished by being brought down by death to clay again.[1] This punishment still lasts. Even though Adam's descendants are cleansed from the guilt of Adam's sin by baptism, yet they are still punished for it by undergoing the death of the flesh.[2] Again, in a sense it may be said that Adam's soul also died, inasmuch as it lost the blessedness of its original condition. "We say that the soul of Adam died by sin; not, indeed, from the substance of living, but from the quality of living. For inasmuch as substance is one thing and quality another, his soul did not so die as not to be, but it did so die as not to be blessed. Yet this same Adam returned afterwards to life through penitence."[3]

(*b*) In the second place, he lost his stability, and became subject to change and all that change implies. Life now became a state of flux, a journeying towards death. Every moment that a man lives he is passing away from life.[4] The curse of change affects both body and mind.[5] Through it the body suffers a perpetual sickness. Now it wastes with idleness, again it faints with work; now it has to be refreshed with food, again it must be relieved by abstinence; it is bathed to prevent dryness, it is wiped with towels that it may not be wet; it is clothed that it may not suffer from cold, fainting with heat it is exposed to the air. It is annoyed by the very things with which it would guard against annoyance; the medicines themselves are causes of sickness.[6] So too with the mind. Fallen man has lost his inward stability and peace. He experiences alternations of hope and fear, joy and grief. He attaches himself to transitory objects, and is continually sorrowing for the loss of them.[7] His mind is at variance with itself, "being ever driven forward to something other than it is, and (except it be kept in

[1] *Mor.* xix. 2; xvii. 46; xxix. 21.
[2] *Ibid.* ix. 54.
[3] *Epp.* vii. 31; cf. vi. 14; *Dial.* iv. 45.
[4] *Mor.* ix. 53; xi. 68; xxv. 4.
[5] *Ibid.* xi. 68.
[6] *Ibid.* viii. 53.
[7] *Ibid.* viii. 54.

its stay by stringent discipline) ever sliding back into worse." [1] "The soul," Gregory says, "in this world is like a ship ascending against the stream of a river: it is never suffered to stay in one place, and it will float back to the lowest point unless it strive for the uppermost." [2] Thus, in consequence of the Fall, human life became full of misery and unrest, harassed by endless cares and troubles.[3] "We have found out of God nothing except affliction." [4]

(*c*) Thirdly, man, by the Fall, lost his power of spiritual vision. "He would not stand in the light, and therefore he lost his eyes." [5] This obscuration Gregory describes as follows. Man lost, first, his knowledge of God and the power to contemplate his Maker.[6] Again, he lost his capacity for apprehending the invisible realities of the spiritual world. "The human soul, through the sin of our first parents, being banished from the joys of Paradise, lost the light of the invisible, and poured itself out wholly in the love of the visible. Its inner sight was darkened. And thus it comes to pass that it knows nothing save the things which, as it were, it touches with the eyes of the body. Now, all visible things—heaven, earth, water, animals, and the rest—have body, and while the mind throws itself wholly upon these it waxes gross and loses the fineness of its inward sense. It is no longer able to lift itself to things on high, but willingly in its weakness lies prostrate amid things below." [7] Once more, man was no longer able to appreciate his own state. Until Christ became incarnate for his enlightenment, man knew not whither he was going. Nor did he understand the deplorable condition in which he found himself. "He was subject to the punishment of his sin, and knew it not, so that he imagined his place of exile to be his proper home, and rejoiced under the burden of his corrupt condition as though in the liberty of salvation." [8] Thus by the Fall Adam's vision was darkened, and all the descendants of Adam have been born into the world, as it were, "without eyes." [9] Nevertheless, man's ignorance is not so dense

[1] *Mor.* xi. 68.
[2] *Reg. Past.* iii. 34.
[3] *Mor.* vi. 16; xiii. 50; xx. 28.
[4] *Ibid.* xxiv. 7.
[5] *Mor.* ix. 50.
[6] *Ibid.* viii. 34; xi. 59; *Dial.* iv. 1; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* i. 2, 7.
[7] *Mor.* v. 61; *Hom. in Ev.* 31, §§ 6, 7.
[8] *Mor.* vii. 2; ix. 20, 93, 94; xi. 58.
[9] *Ibid.* viii. 49.

that he is unable to distinguish right from wrong. "For Almighty God has made man a rational creature, distinct from all that are void of sense and reason, in order that he may not be ignorant of what he has done. For by the law of Nature he is compelled to know whether what he does is right or wrong. Else why is he brought to judgment for his conduct, if he could be ignorant of what he has done? Even those, therefore, who refuse to be instructed by the precepts of the Lord, know the things which they do, whether they be good or evil. . . . For that they know the evil which they do, they have their conscience as a witness; they have their reason as a judge."[1]

(*d*) Finally, man lost his original righteousness, by which he was enabled to live in conformity with the will of God. (i.) In the first place, his free will was weakened. On this point Gregory modifies the doctrine of Augustine. The African Father, while ascribing to man, even in his fallen state, a certain formal freedom, yet robbed this freedom of all reality by defining it as the mere liberty to do evil. Free will in this sense is nothing more than spontaneity: it is a mode of action, but not a source of action. But from such a theory Gregory, with his Roman moralism and strong practical common sense, recoiled. He preferred the milder teaching of the Council of Orange, that free will was weakened in Adam, but not lost. As will be seen when we come to the doctrine of Grace, Gregory attributed a very real significance to the will which Augustine had reduced to a mere abstraction. He admitted, indeed, that it is helpless without grace. But though it requires the assistance of grace if it is to will the good, it is nevertheless still an original agent, capable of co-operating with grace, and not merely the instrument of grace, made wholly what it is by grace. This will be more fully explained later on. Here it is sufficient to observe that, according to Gregory's view, free will was not destroyed by the Fall of Adam, but was nevertheless so weakened that it is no longer able by its own efforts to rise to goodness. Having once yielded consent to sin, man lost the power of successfully resisting sin, and it is part of his punishment that what he brought upon himself of his own free will he should be compelled to bear against his will.[2] "For

[1] *Mor.* xxvii. 48.

[2] *Ibid.* iv. 47: "Nunc sub mortalitatis pondere gemimus, quamvis ad hoc

it is through ourselves that we have been brought low, but to rise again by our own strength is beyond our ability. The fault of our own will once brought us down, but the punishment of our fault sinks us lower day by day. We strive with earnest endeavour to lift ourselves to the righteousness we have lost, but we are kept down by the weight of our just dues."[1] Gregory compares this weakened will to a caged lioness. Once it was perfectly free, but by its own act it rushed into the cage of corruption, so that now in spite of all its efforts it cannot escape unless it be released by the hand of grace.[2] Human freedom, then, according to Gregory, is not abrogated by the Fall. Man, assisted by grace, can co-operate with God in the work of salvation. But until grace comes to strengthen him, he cannot break the chains with which he has caused himself to be bound. The will may fret against its bondage, but it can only escape from it through the mercy of God.

(ii.) In the second place, besides the weakening of the will, the loss of original righteousness involved the dissolution of the original relation of the flesh to the spirit of man. When Adam revolted from God, he lost the power of controlling his own body, and the war between the flesh and the spirit began.[3] For the flesh refused to obey the spirit, which would not submit itself to God.[4] The repose of the soul was broken,[5] and man for the first time experienced the goading of sinful lust.[6] Hence, instead of a sure and painless development in goodness, which would have been the lot of unfallen man,[7] the descendants of Adam have to work out their salvation with toil and difficulty.[8] They are obliged to practise stern self-repression

arbitrio nostro venerimus; quia et iudicii sic iustitia exigit, ut quod sponte fecimus, inviti toleremus." *Ibid.* viii. 19: "Quia enim fixa mens stare cum potuit noluit, stare iam non valet etiam cum volet." *Ibid.* xv. 19: "Stanti homini verba blandae persuasionis intulit (diabolus); sed quem semel rapuit ad consensum, iam nunc etiam renitentem trahit, et corruptionis suae delectationibus devictum pene violenter interficit." Cf. *ibid.* viii. 52; [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* iv. 2, cc. 9, 10.

[1] *Mor.* viii. 51.

[2] *Ibid.* ix. 86.

[3] *Ibid.* ix. 5: "Primus humani generis parens, quia auctoris praecepto restitit, carnis protinus contumeliam sensit; et quia subesse conditori per inobedientiam noluit, sub semetipso prostratus et pacem corporis protinus amisit."

[4] *Ibid.* xxvi. 28.

[5] *Ibid.* iv. 54.

[6] [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* vi. 2, c. 38.

[7] *Mor.* xxxv. 28.

[8] *Ibid.* xxxv. 43.

and to cultivate great virtues which were not before required. "For many qualities," says Gregory, "now need to be displayed which were not necessary in Paradise. Now we require the virtue of patience, laborious instruction in learning, chastening of the body, assiduity in prayer, confession of faults, a deluge of tears. But man wanted none of these in his original state, because by his very condition he enjoyed the blessing of salvation."[1] The only road back to Paradise is the thorny path of weeping, of obedience, of despising the visible, of restraining the appetites of the flesh.[2]

Sin. The consequences of Adam's Fall may be summarized negatively as the loss of original blessedness, positively as the entry of sin into human life. Gregory has taken some pains to elaborate a doctrine of sin, though his definitions are not strictly scientific. As has been pointed out in a previous section, he deals very slightly with the metaphysical problem of evil. He was content here to repeat the philosophic formula of Augustine: "Every sin is without foundation, because it has no subsistence in its own nature. For evil is without substance."[3] In other words, sin is the defect of a good nature, the corruption of good, and it can only exist in so far as it inheres in the good. Hence a totally depraved nature —one that is merely "a seed-bed of sin"—is, according to Gregory, unthinkable. However sinful man may be, he must yet retain some elements of goodness; else it would be impossible to predicate of him anything at all, even sin. By maintaining the doctrine of the unsubstantiality of evil, Gregory implicitly rejects the theory of total depravity: God's creation is spoiled by sin, but it is still good.

Passing thus lightly over the question of the nature of sin itself, Gregory is concerned to distinguish with nicety its various shades and degrees. The first degree of sin is "delictum," which is defined negatively as "the abandonment of good," and is concerned with thoughts. Next comes "peccatum," positive wrong-doing in words and in actions.[4] "Iniquitas" is peccatum aggravated,[5] the worst form of it ("iniquitas maxima") being

[1] *Mor.* xxxv. 44.
[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 10, § 7.
[3] *Mor.* xxvi. 68.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 9, § 3.
[5] *Mor.* xi. 57: "Plus iniquitas quam peccatum sonat, et omnis se homo libere peccatorem fatetur, iniquum vero dicere nonnunquam erubescit."

arrogant self-reliance in contempt of Divine grace.[1] "Scelus" and "crimen" are extreme modes of peccatum, and are both of them concerned with actions. But whereas no man can be free from peccatum, all may be without crimen: and while peccatum stains the soul, crimen destroys it. Such a damning sin is sensuality, which, unless it be repented of, cancels all good works.[2] Gregory draws another distinction between "iniquitas" and "impietas." The "iniqui" are they who act unrighteously, though they profess the Christian faith; the "impii" are they who are separated from the faith.[3] Both these classes of sinners are punished with the eternal pains of hell; but the "iniqui" are condemned by the formal sentence of the Judge in whom they believe, while the "impii" are condemned summarily without the form of law, since they refused to acknowledge the obligation of the law.[4]

Sin is committed through the co-operation of the devil and man. The devil tempts and man consents.[5] Free will is a necessary factor; since the devil would be powerless without the co-operation of the human will. Man, therefore, helps to wound himself, and is a fellow-worker with the devil for his own downfall.[6] The process by which sin is committed in the heart is analyzed as follows. First, there is the suggestion of sin, proceeding from the devil. The suggestion is not itself sin, but it gives man knowledge of sin, and so prepares the way for sin. Next there is pleasure in sin, coming through the flesh. This delight is called the "nutriment of sin." Thirdly, there is consent to sin, of the spirit, whereby the sin is brought to completion. Lastly, the sin thus completed is sometimes aggravated by man's impudent defence of it—the work of pride.[7] Sin, being thus engendered in the heart, is consummated in action in four ways. First, man sins in secret; next, he sins openly and is not ashamed; thirdly, he develops a habit of sin; and lastly, he recklessly abandons himself to it, misled either by false hopes of mercy or by despair of pardon.[8] Gregory teaches, moreover, that a sin, when consummated, unless

[1] *Mor.* xxii. 21.
[2] *Ibid.* xxi. 19; xi. 57; [Greg.] *Concord. Test. S. Script.* 10.
[3] *Mor.* xviii. 12; xxv. 25.
[4] *Ibid.* xxvi. 50.
[5] *Ibid.* xv. 31.
[6] *Ibid.* xiii. 19.
[7] *Ibid.* iv. 49; *Epp.* xi. 56*a*; *Reg. Past.* iii. 29; *Hom. in Ev.* 16, § 1.
[8] *Mor.* iv. 49.

it be wiped out by penance, becomes in turn the cause of sin, since it is the character of sin to accumulate. One sin disposes a man for the committal of another, as when gluttony leads to adultery, and adultery to murder. And again, not only is a sin the cause of sins to come, but it is also the punishment of sins that went before. For each new sin, springing from a former sin, increases the guilt of that sin, and brings upon it heavier punishment. Thus, in the instance quoted, the guilt and punishment of the sin of gluttony is increased by the subsequent adultery and murder, which sprang from the gluttony. And in this way the subsequent sins may be said to be the punishment of the preceding sins, inasmuch as they bring upon them a heavier retribution. Thus every sin looks backward and forward; it increases the penalty due to the sins of the past, and it gives birth to new sins by which its own guilt will be augmented.[1] With every sin the sinner becomes more deeply involved in transgression; the goodness of his created nature is increasingly swallowed up; and "sin taking occasion of sin enchains the lost soul."[2]

Gregory touches on the question of the relation of sin and ignorance. Sometimes man first becomes blind in his understanding, and in consequence of this gives himself up a slave to sin. Sometimes he sins against his better knowledge, and as a punishment is smitten with blindness. The two things are intimately connected. For every sin committed darkens the understanding; and, on the other hand, the more the soul is blinded, the more willingly does it surrender itself to sin. Sin and ignorance, therefore, increase together and cause each other. Yet no man can plead ignorance as an excuse for sin, because ignorance itself was in the first instance voluntarily produced by sinning.[3] "Whence it comes to pass that the soul, being first encompassed by voluntary darkness, afterwards does not any longer even know the good that it should seek. The more it attaches itself to evil, the less does it apprehend the good that it loses."[4] Man, therefore, must always be held responsible even for the sins which he commits in ignorance.

The two principal sins, according to Gregory, are Pride and

[1] *Mor.* xxv. 22–24; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 11, § 24.
[2] *Mor.* vii. 36.
[3] *Ibid.* vii. 37; iv. 25.
[4] *Ibid.* xx. 37; cf. *ibid.* xxv. 29.

Lust. These are connected closely with each other, for the revolt of the flesh from the spirit (lust) was the consequence of the revolt of the spirit from God (pride). Pride, however, is the root and origin both of lust and of every other sin.[1] Gregory has drawn up a table of vices, which he compares to an army led by captains, under the supreme leadership of Pride.[2] The table on page 388 represents Gregory's scheme.

Of the seven capital sins, five are spiritual and two are carnal; but all of them, springing from a common origin, are intimately connected with one another, and merge into one another. Thus vain-glory, if admitted into the heart, introduces the other five spiritual sins; while of the carnal sins, gluttony, if encouraged, ends in lust. Any one of the seven vices will open the door to all.[3]

Gregory adds that the real cause of all trouble is sin. Drought, tempest, and famine are all of them the consequence of sin, and sent for our chastisement. "Each insensate thing is put in motion for our annoyance only by the impulse of our own doings."[4]

Original Sin. In his doctrine of original sin Gregory does little more than repeat the Augustinian formulas. In accordance with these, original sin is conceived as the innate corruption of the soul, out of which all actual sins afterwards proceed. It takes the form of lust, the rebellion of the flesh against the spirit. It is derived from Adam. For human nature as a whole was embodied in its first representative, and was corrupted by his act, so that all who inherit that nature inherit also the corruption. When the root became rotten the branches withered.[5] In Adam the very substance of humanity became tainted, so that all who are created from it share in a common pollution.[6] Thus the act of Adam is regarded as the common act of mankind in their collective form of

[1] *Mor.* xxvi. 28, 29. In *ibid.* xiv. 64 Gregory calls pride and vain-glory "duo principalia vitia."

[2] *Ibid.* xxxi. 87, 88.

[3] *Ibid.* xxxi. 89.

[4] *Ibid.* vi. 14.

[5] *Ibid.* xvii. 21: "Quia in radice putruit humani generis ramus, in conditionis suae viriditate minime subsistit." Cf. *ibid.* xxii. 31.

[6] *Ibid.* xxiv. 4: "Omnes videlicet nos inimica illa persuasio in culpae contagio ab ipsa radice polluerat, nullusque erat qui apud Deum pro peccatoribus loquens, a peccato liber appareret, quia ex eadem massa editos aeque cunctos par reatus involverat."

Superbia vitiorum regina

Septem principalia vitia

Inanis gloria	Invidia	Ira	Tristitia	Avaritia	Ventris ingluvies	Luxuria
Inobedientia	Odium	Rixae	Malitia	Proditio	Inepta laetitia	Caecitas mentis
Iactantia	Susurratio	Tumor mentis	Rancor	Fraus	Scurrilitas	Inconsideratio
Hypocrisis	Detractio	Contumeliae	Pusillanimitas	Fallacia	Immunditia	Inconstantia
Contentiones	Exultatio in adversis proximi	Clamor	Desperatio	Perjuria	Multiloquium	Praecipitatio
Pertinaciae	Afflictio in prosperis proximi	Indignatio	Torpor circa praecepta	Inquietudo	Hebetudo sensus circa intelligentiam	Amor sui
Discordiae		Blasphemiae	Vagatio mentis erga illicita	Violentiae		Odium Dei
Novitatum praesumptiones				Contra misericordiam obdurationes cordis		Affectus praesentis saeculi Horror vel desperatio futuri

existence, an act for which all are responsible. In him the whole race sinned, and therefore the guilt of that sin attaches to every individual from the moment of his birth. "When the first man fell from God, we were driven from the joys of Paradise, and were involved in the miseries of this mortal life. And we feel by the pain of our punishment what a grievous fault we committed by the persuasion of the serpent. For having fallen from that state we have found, out of God, nothing save affliction. And because we have followed the flesh through the sight of the eyes, we are tortured by the very flesh which we preferred to the commandments of God."[1] "We derive original sin from our parents, and except we be loosed from it by the grace of baptism, we bear the sins of our parents, seeing that we are assuredly still one with them. And so He visits the sins of the fathers on the children when, on account of the fault of the parent, the soul of the offspring is polluted by original sin. But, on the other hand, He does not visit the sins of the fathers on the children, in that, when we are freed from original sin by baptism, we no longer have the sins of our fathers, but those only of which we have ourselves been guilty."[2]

All then must be counted sinners from the earliest beginning of individual life. We are born "children of Gehenna,"[3] "condemned sinners,"[4] "infected with sin from our very origin."[5] Hence infants who die unbaptized, before they have sinned by any individual act of will, are condemned to everlasting torments for the guilt of their birth alone. Mere existence is a state of sin; to be born is sufficient qualification for the punishment of hell.[6] This extreme punishment is remitted by baptism; but even baptism does not free us from all penalties. For in due of original sin all men alike suffer the death of the flesh.[7] The saints of the Old Testament suffered the further penalty of exclusion from Paradise after their death. For the sake of original sin they were kept imprisoned in Hades, but without torment, until, by the descent of Christ, they were set free from inherited guilt and admitted into the presence of God.[8]

[1] *Mor.* xxiv. 7. [2] *Ibid.* xv. 57. [3] *Ibid.* iv. 62. [4] *Ibid.* iv. 45.
[5] *Ibid.* xxiv. 4. [6] *Ibid.* ix. 32. [7] *Ibid.* ix. 54.
[8] *Ibid.* iv. 56; xii. 13; xiii. 49; xx. 66; xxix. 23; *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 4, 22, § 6.

Nature, thus corrupted in Adam, is transmitted to succeeding generations through the act of physical procreation. The instrument of transmission is the sexual appetite. This Augustinian conception fitted in with Gregory's ascetic ideas, and is therefore strongly emphasized by him. Sexual desire is at once sinful itself, and the means of propagating a sinful nature. "We come into this world," says Gregory, "from corruption and along with corruption, and we carry our corruption with us."[1] "It is certain that the prince of this world has somewhat in the action, or speech, or thought of all those who are conceived from carnal delight."[2] "Though we are made holy, yet we are not born holy, because we are tied and bound by the constitution of a corruptible nature, that we should say with the Prophet: *Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.* But He alone is truly born holy who, in order that He might conquer that same condition of a corruptible nature, was not conceived by carnal conjunction."[3] But although Gregory accentuates the impurity of man's origin and the defilement in the act of generation, he, like Augustine, refuses to condemn marriage itself as sin. Wedlock, if entered upon for the purpose of producing offspring, is good and lawful. Nevertheless, inasmuch as procreation cannot in actual fact take place without carnal lust, it has in it somewhat of sin.[4] Even lawful marriage is but a Zoar of escape from temptation.[5] Celibacy is the higher state.

[1] *Mor.* xiii. 50.

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 39, § 8.

[3] *Mor.* xviii. 84. Cf. *ibid.* xii. 37: "Primam quippe viro iniustitiam mulier propinavit in paradiso. Quomodo ergo iustus apparebit, qui de illa natus est quae iniustitiae propinatrix exstitit?" Cf. *ibid.* xi. 70: "Quisquis autem occultae tentationis motus atque immunditiam cogitationis evicerit, nequaquam sibi suam munditiam tribuat, quia de immundo conceptum semine nullus facere mundum potest, nisi is qui mundus per semetipsum solus est. Qui ergo iam ad locum munditiae mente pervenit, conceptionis suae viam respiciat, per quam venit, atque inde colligat quia ex sua virtute non habet munditiam vivendi, cui de immunditia factum est initium subsistendi."

[4] *Epp.* xi. 56*a*: "Nec culpam deputamus esse coniugium. Sed quia ipsa licita commixtio coniugis sine voluptate carnis fieri non potest, a sacri loci ingressu abstinendum est, quia voluptas ipsa sine culpa nullatenus esse potest." Cf. *Mor.* xxvi. 44; xxxii. 39; *Hom. in Ev.* 36, § 5; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* iv. 7; v. 26; *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* vi. i. 14. Gregory forbad marriages to be dissolved "sub obtentu religionis" (*Epp.* xi. 27).

[5] *Reg. Past.* iii. 27.

This doctrine of the transmission of original sin by means of natural generation inclined Gregory to embrace the Traducian theory of the soul's origin. On this point, however, like Augustine, he expresses himself with reserve. He says that the origin of the soul is a question which has been much debated by the Fathers, but it is one which is incapable of solution in this life. If Creationism is right, why are unbaptized infants damned, seeing that their souls have never yielded consent to the promptings of the sinful flesh? But if Traducianism is true, and the soul originates with the body from the act of procreation, how is it that it does not also die with the body? But while he thus refuses to dogmatize on a matter so uncertain, Gregory certainly tends rather towards Traducianism, which better harmonized with his views on original sin. And in this, it may be observed, Gregory reverses the usual process. For whereas most theologians deduced the doctrine of original sin from the Traducian belief, Gregory is inclined to infer Traducianism from the doctrine of original sin. For him Traducianism may or may not be true, but original sin is a certain fact which is taken for granted. This, therefore, is the starting-point.[1]

The State of Sin. All the descendants of Adam, then, are born into a state of sin, for all alike are inheritors of a corrupted nature. Therefore, so long as life lasts, no man can be entirely free from sin.[2] For although, by God's grace, sin may be prevented from breaking out in words and acts, yet even so it lurks in the heart and pollutes the thoughts.[3] Gregory, however, draws a distinction between unavoidable sin—sin which defiles the mind even against our will—and the sin of consent. So long as we are burdened with a corrupt nature we cannot be free from sinful desires. "But it is one thing for the soul to be touched against its will, and another to be killed by consenting." Sin cannot but "be" in our mortal body; but it need not "reign" in it through the consent of the will to the suggestion of the flesh.[4] Many of the ancient saints, even

[1] *Epp.* ix. 147.

[2] *Mor.* viii. 56; ix. 55, 57, 106; xvii. 22; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 4, § 6; *Hom. in Ev.* 39, § 8.

[3] *Mor.* xxiv. 32; *Hom. in Ev.* 37, § 7.

[4] *Mor.* xxi. 7, 12; cf. iv. 71; xiv. 21; xviii. 11.

before the Law, lived perfect lives according to the light of nature, and pleased God.[1] And we also, by penance and careful self-examination, can prevent unlawful desires from subjugating the soul.[2] The wilful committal of sin and the neglect to atone for it alone is unforgivable.

Thus, then, through sin, both original and actual, human nature has become corrupt. "Man wilfully forsook his innate stability (*soliditas ingenita*) and plunged into a whirlpool of corruption; and therefore now he either slips into impure works or is defiled with forbidden thoughts. Human nature itself, being, as it were, made subject to its own sin in punishment for that sin, has been put out of gear. If left to itself, it is carried away to evil works; if restrained, it is darkened by the pressing imagination of evil."[3] Thus man is "abominable by reason of the pollution of his sin, and useless on account of the unrighteousness of his imperfect life."[4] The race has fallen into a long sickness, and can only be cured by the Divine Physician. But Christ became incarnate to effect the cure,[5] and by His obedience repaired the disobedience of Adam.[6] From Him,[7] through the Spirit, man receives an infusion of grace, by which he is enabled to rise above his corruption and do good works.[8] The injury done to the human race by the Fall of Adam has its remedy in the Grace of Christ.

Section II.—The Doctrine of Grace.

In his doctrine of Grace, Gregory took up a position midway between pure Augustinianism and semi-Pelagianism. As against the former, he claimed some merit for man's consenting and co-operating will, and omitted the doctrines of irresistible grace and unconditional election. In opposition to the latter, he denied man's ability to initiate good, and gave the chief weight to the precedent and enabling grace of God. His doctrine is a compromise, an attempt to mediate, between the

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 11.
[2] *Mor.* iv. 71; xxi. 12; xxxii. 5.
[3] *Mor.* viii. 22.
[4] *Ibid.* xii. 39.
[5] *Ibid.* xviii. 73.
[6] *Ibid.* xxxv. 28.
[7] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 5, § 16: "Bona nostra eius sunt opera, cuius visceribus non suffecit ut nos erigeret, nisi et semetipsum pro nobis inclinaret."
[8] *Ibid.* i. 10, §§ 44, 45.

system of Augustine and the claims of practical morality. It is Augustinianism softened down in the interests of practical Christianity, the Augustinianism of the Canons of Orange. This compromise, transmitted by Gregory to the Middle Ages, has found general acceptance, despite its logical defects. Nevertheless, regarded from the purely speculative point of view, it is inconsistent and unsatisfying. Hence it is that strict Augustinianism had at all times its adherents, and attained a new and important development at the Reformation. By the majority, however, the semi-Augustinian compromise of Gregory has been preferred.

Grace. Grace, according to Gregory, is the mysterious power of God, which comes to us by the Holy Spirit, and transforms us from sin unto righteousness. Its effect is both negative and positive. Negatively, it sets us free from the guilt of wickedness (*a reatu nequitiae*),[1] pardons our past sins,[2] dispels our blindness,[3] and removes the obstacles which hinder our communion with God. Positively, it illumines and assists,[4] enabling us both to confess and to practise what is right,[5] and making us fit for the heavenly kingdom.[6] Thus, in giving us grace, God grants us both "life and mercy." "For 'life' is given when goodness is inspired into evil minds. But 'life' cannot be had without 'mercy,' in that God does not aid us to attain to righteousness, unless He first in mercy remits our past iniquities."[7] By this twofold operation of grace man is reconciled to God and gains salvation. For although man, corrupt as he is, can do nothing himself to render his Judge propitious, yet he can avert His anger by offering up to Him His own work—the gifts of Divine grace.[8]

Unmerited Grace. Inheriting, as he did, Augustine's deep conviction of sin, Gregory rejected the semi-Pelagian notion that man can in any sense initiate good, or make unaided the feeblest tentative effort after holiness. All good is of grace: nature can only produce evil.[9] Hence grace is not bestowed

[1] *Mor.* xxxii. 14.
[2] *Ibid.* ix. 80.
[3] *Ibid.* viii. 49.
[4] *Hom. in Ev.* 31, § 7; *Epp.* vii. 33.
[5] *Mor.* xviii. 65.
[6] *Mor.* xix. 52.
[7] *Ibid.* ix. 81.
[8] *Ibid.* ix. 73.
[9] *Ibid.* xxviii. 20: "Justificato peccatori aperte Veritas dicat: Virtutes a me acceptas tibi non tribuas, noli contra me de meo munere extolli. Recole ubi te inveni quando meo timore prima in te fundamenta virtutum posui.

on man because he has done good works, but in order that he may do good works. "Heavenly grace does not find desert in man in order to make it come, but after it has come it causes the same."[1] Gregory is very emphatic on this point. He says that it is a mark of pride to imagine that we have received from God any good quality in consequence of our own merits. "For St. Paul warns us not to believe that any gift of grace is given us for our precedent merits, when he says: *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.* Who also says of himself: *Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious; but I obtained mercy.* In these words he plainly declares that grace is not given according to merit, teaching us in his own case, both what he deserved of himelf for his evil deeds, and what he obtained of God's benevolence."[2] Elsewhere again Gregory says: "No one has first given anything to God, so that Divine grace should follow him. For if we prevented God by our good works, where is that which the Prophet says: *The God of my mercy shall prevent me*? If we have given any good works so as to deserve His grace, where is that which the Apostle says: *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works*? If our love prevented God, where is that which St. John says: *Not that we loved God, but that He loved us*? where is that which the Lord says by Hosea: *I will love them freely*? If without His gift, by our own strength we follow God, where is that which the Truth declares in the Gospel, saying: *Without Me ye can do nothing*? and again: *No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him*? and again, *Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you*? If we only prevent the gifts of good works by thinking aright by our own strength, where is that which is said so salutarily by St. Paul, that all human self-confidence might be utterly rooted out: *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God*? No one therefore prevents God by

Recole ubi te inveni quando meo te timore solidavi. Ut ergo ego in te non destruam quod construxi, ipse non cesses considerare quod reperi. Quem enim Veritas nisi aut in flagitiis aut in excessibus invenit?" Cf. *Mor.* xviii. 62, 65; xxix. 54.

[1] *Ibid.* xviii. 63.

[2] *Ibid.* xxiii. 13.

his merits, so as to be able to hold Him as his debtor. But the all-just Creator has in a wonderful manner chosen some beforehand, and some He justly leaves in their own wicked habits."[1] Thus Gregory teaches that grace is not earned, but is given freely, and the sole reason for the gift is the inscrutable will of God. "He doeth all things according to the counsel of His will; not in answer to our desert, but because He Himself so wills."[2] When grace has once been given, however, it works within man merits which God rewards. "When God comes to the undeserving soul, He presents it to Himself as deserving by His coming, and He causes therein merit for Him to recompense, though He found only somewhat for Him to punish."[3]

The Working of Grace. Righteousness, according to Gregory, is attained by the co-operation of grace and free will. In the former he distinguishes two stages or moments—that of Prevenient Grace, which disposes man to will the good he willed not, and that of Subsequent Grace, which enables man to do the good he wills.[4] The whole process he describes as follows:—

(1) Prevenient Grace (regarded by Gregory as both *operans* and *cooperans*) in the first place sets free the will from its bondage to sin, thereby making it possible for it to choose the good[5]; and in the second place assists the will, thus emancipated, to will the good. Here it should be noticed that Gregory lays great stress on the free action of the will, which he views as an original agent, and not merely as an instrument in the hand of the operator. And on this point, as I have said, he parts company with Augustine. For while Augustine regards the co-operating will as a mere form under which grace unfolds itself—it being irresistibly determined from within, so that its assent to the promptings of grace follows with certainty (the assent itself being a gift of grace)—Gregory attributes to it a real

[1] *Mor.* xxxiii. 38. [2] *Ibid.* xx. 11. [3] *Ibid.* xviii. 63.

[4] *Ibid.* xxii. 20: "Sancti viri sciunt post primi parentis lapsum de corruptibili stirpe se editos, et non virtute propria, sed praeveniente superna gratia ad meliora se vota vel opera commutatos; et quidquid sibi mali inesse cognoscunt, de mortali propagine sentiunt meritum; quidquid vero in se boni inspiciunt, immortalis gratiae cognoscunt donum, eique de accepto munere debitores fiunt, qui et praeveniendo dedit eis bonum velle quod noluerunt, et subsequendo concessit bonum posse quod volunt."

[5] *Epp.* vii. 33; viii. 34; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 2.

independence, in virtue of which, when once it is freed from the necessity of choosing evil, it can reject or co-operate with the grace that has freed it. In other words, while Augustine maintains that the will is made what it is by grace wholly, so that its co-operation with grace is nothing more than grace, under the form of self-determination, co-operating with grace; Gregory holds that the will is not so determined that it cannot fail to co-operate, but merely that it is given the power of co-operating if it will. Thus, grace and free will are two independent, necessary factors in sanctification. Gregory finds this doctrine in 1 Cor. xv. 10, on which he writes: "Whereas the goodness of God prevents us to make us innocent, Paul says: *By the grace of God I am what I am.* And whereas our free will follows that grace, he adds: *And His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all.* And again, seeing that he was nothing of himself, he says: *Yet not I;* but since he saw that he was something in union with grace, he added: *But the grace of God which was with me.* For he would not have said *with me,* if together with preventing grace he had not had free will following it up. Therefore, in order to show that he was nothing without grace, he says: *Yet not I*; but that he might show that he had worked together with grace by free will, he added: *But the grace of God which was with me.*"[1] It follows from this that every good act of ours is, in a certain degree, really our own, and is not merely the effect of grace working through us. "The good that we do," says Gregory, "belongs both to God and to ourselves. It is God's by preventing grace, our own by the free will which follows. For if it is not of God, why do we return Him thanks for ever? Again, if it is not our own, why do we hope for rewards? Because then we do not give thanks undeservedly, we know that we are prevented by His grace: and again, because we do not seek for recompense undeservedly, we know that, by the compliance of free will, we have chosen good deeds to perform."[2] Elsewhere again he writes: "Because when Divine grace goes before us in good works our free will follows it, we, who yield our consent to God who delivers us, are said to deliver ourselves. Hence Paul, when he said: *I*

[1] *Mor.* xvi. 30.

[2] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 40; cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 2.

laboured more abundantly than they all, lest he should seem to ascribe his labours to himself, immediately added: *Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* For since he had followed with his free will the preventing grace of God in him, he properly adds, *with me*, that he might neither be unthankful for the Divine gift, nor yet remain a stranger to the merit of free will."[1]

(2) While Prevenient Grace emancipates the will and co-operates with it when emancipated, Subsequent Grace enables us actually to carry out the good that we will. "By prevenient grace," says Gregory, almost in the words of Augustine, "God inspires us to will: by subsequent grace He assists us that we may not will in vain, but that we may be able to carry out what we will."[2] Without this additional outpouring of grace we cannot complete any good work. "By the grace of Almighty God we can indeed attempt good works, but we cannot fulfil them without the help of Him who commands them."[3] Hence holy men are in a twofold way "debtors to God, who, by preventing them, vouchsafed them to will the good they willed not, and, by following them, vouchsafed them to be able to do the good they will."[4] Thus, in another sense, "God gives us 'life' and 'mercy'; for in mercy He prevents us that we may lead a good life, and in mercy He follows us to preserve what He has given. For except He add mercy, the life which He vouchsafes us cannot be preserved."[5] Grace then attains its perfect work when it enables a man to do good works and to persevere in them to the end. Without the "donum perseverantiae," all is useless. "The good that we do is vain if it be given over before the end of life: it is vain for a man to run fast if he fails before he reaches the goal."[6]

The effect of this twofold working of grace is to attract towards God all human thoughts and actions. It is, says Gregory, "for God so to change us within and without, and to attract us towards Himself, that the mind may no longer be pleased with any outward thing, and that the flesh, even if it wishes it, may not attempt to attain any low object; but that

[1] *Mor.* xxiv. 24.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 2.
[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 2.
[4] *Mor.* xxii. 20.
[5] *Mor.* ix. 81.
[6] *Ibid.* i. 55; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* ii. 12.

the whole man may inwardly have his desires kindled towards Him from whom he springs, and may outwardly bind himself to Him by self-control." [1]

The Relation of Grace to Human Merits. Even Augustine, with his imperfect recognition of the freedom of the will and his absolute view of the nature and work of grace, had still no thought of rejecting the old ecclesiastical moralism, which made the ultimate destiny of man depend on merits. On the contrary, he endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between the two principles by his formula, "God crowns our merits by crowning His own gifts." Gregory, to whom the moralistic scheme of Tertullian appealed far more strongly than it did to the more speculative Augustine, fastened eagerly on this formula, though he interpreted the word "gifts" in a less absolute sense than did his master. On the one hand, he emphatically asserts that man, unaided by grace, can have no merits and can do no good works. "The work proceeds from the gift, not the gift from the work. Otherwise grace is no more grace. For God's gifts prevent all works of ours, although the gifts themselves are increased when they are followed up by works." [2] On the other hand, he contends that man, when assisted by grace, has merits, inasmuch as the free will can co-operate with grace for good works. And the works which result from the good will, assisted by grace, God imputes to man himself, and rewards as if they were entirely his own. "Heavenly Goodness," says Gregory, "first works something in ourselves without the help of ourselves, that when our own will also follows it up, it may do along with ourselves the good that we desire. Yet the good which comes by grace bestowed God so rewards in us as if it had proceeded from ourselves alone." [3] Gregory illustrates the doctrine of merits from the case of Cornelius. For Cornelius, having first received from God the gift of imperfect faith, "earned by his good practice that he should come to know God perfectly and believe the mystery of His Incarnation, and so attain to the sacrament of baptism." His salvation was thus the reward of his merits,

[1] *Mor.* xxiv. 47.

[2] *Dial.* i. 4.

[3] *Mor.* xvi. 30. Cf. *ibid.* xviii. 63: "Ad indignam mentem veniens Deus, dignam sibi exhibet veniendo; et facit in ea meritum quod remuneret, qui hoc solum invenerat quod puniret." *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 2; *Mor.* xxxiii. 40.

but his merits themselves resulted from the preliminary gift of grace.[1] Our righteousness, then, though derived from God, is, in virtue of our free will, truly our own. "It is called our righteousness, not as being of ourselves, but as made ours by God's bounty. . . . It is God's, since it is His gift; but it becomes truly ours inasmuch as we accept it."[2] It will be seen from the above that, though Gregory accepts the Augustinian formula, "God crowns our merits by crowning His own gifts," he nevertheless understands it in a sense not quite Augustinian. For while Augustine's doctrine of absolute inability necessitated the conclusion that meritorious works were solely and entirely the gift of God, Gregory taught that they sprang from the co-operation of an independent though emancipated will, with emancipating grace, so that they might be said to belong partly to God and partly to ourselves. God's mercy, however, magnifies our share in them, imputing them wholly to us, and rewarding them as if they sprang from ourselves alone. Such good works, for which we are actually partly responsible, and which God in His mercy imputes to us wholly, are merits, and give us a claim to eternal salvation.

The Defectibility of Grace. Gregory teaches that grace may be withdrawn. It operates for sanctification in a wide circle who yet finally perish; many being called, but not all called to the purpose.[3] "Let us tremble," he says, "at the blessings we have received. We know what we are to-day, but we know not what we may become after a little while."[4] In the case of those predestined to election, however, grace, though sometimes withdrawn for a time, is never permanently withheld. "In respect of those gifts, without which it is impossible to attain to life, the Holy Spirit ever abides in His preachers and in all the elect."[5] Those from whom He finally withdraws were never really elect, though they may have seemed so.[6] Nevertheless, even from the elect, grace is sometimes withheld for a time, that they may learn their own weakness and attribute all their goodness to God, and also that other sinners,

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 7, § 9.
[2] *Mor.* xxiv. 13; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* vii. 11.
[3] *Mor.* viii. 66, 84; ix. 20; xxix. 59; xxxiv. 30; *Hom. in Ev.* 30, § 2; 31, § 7.
[4] *Mor.* xxv. 21. [5] *Ibid.* ii. 91. [6] *Ibid.* xxxiv. 29.

seeing the sins of the elect, may learn to hope for pardon for themselves.[1]

Of *Irresistible Grace* Gregory knows nothing. There is, indeed, one passage in which he appears to touch upon the doctrine. He says: "As no one withstands God's bountifulness in calling, so no one withstands His justice in forsaking."[2] But this passage should not be over-pressed. Apart from the fact that Gregory frequently speaks of man's rejecting Divine grace, it is clear that the doctrine of irresistible grace is quite incompatible with his general theory of the relation of grace to free will. Augustine's view of grace as a moral power which in the elect infallibly attains its end, *i.e.* the salvation of its subject, could not possibly harmonize with the scheme of Gregory, which made the free and independent action of the human will an essential factor in the work of salvation. That the will had power to receive or reject grace (without being caused to receive it, or irresistibly drawn to respond to God's calling, or so assisted that it could not do other than respond) is surely the pivot on which Gregory's entire system turns. Hence, while taking much from Augustine, Gregory leaves the doctrine of irresistible grace alone.

Predestination. Gregory's theory of Predestination is full of confusion and contradiction. Unable to accept in its entirety the Augustinian doctrine of an absolute decree, Gregory wavers between this and the older view of a conditional predestination, grounded on God's prescience of the free acts of man. Dissatisfied with both hypotheses, he left the problem without solution. Gregory was further unable to adjust the doctrine of a "certus numerus electorum," which he took over from Augustine, with his conviction that all men received a sincere call to salvation. His admiration for Augustine, indeed, led him into continual inconsistencies. He endeavoured to reproduce Augustinian thoughts without the doctrine of unconditional election, in which they centred. And the result is a patchwork of borrowed ideas, devoid of internal consistency, and placed in a very loose and indefinite relation to the general doctrine of grace, of which they form a part. In the weakened

[1] *Mor.* ii. 78; viii. 48; ix. 80; xiv. 42; xxiii. 54; xxxiv. 3; *Hom. in Ev.* 20, § 15; [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 4, 17.

[2] *Mor.* xi. 13.

Augustinianism here set forth, Gregory perhaps appears at his worst. At almost every point, if carefully examined, his doctrine of predestination breaks down.

To Gregory, as to Augustine, predestination is only of the elect. He knows nothing of a "praedestinatio duplex." God predestinates some to salvation; the rest He leaves in their own wickedness, passing them over, so that they earn damnation.[1] Predestination, therefore, has reference only to the good. Gregory understands by the term the selection by God of a certain number of the human race, on whom He so bestows His grace that they are enabled to acquire merits and attain final salvation. The ground of this predestination Gregory finds himself unable to determine. Sometimes he is inclined to adopt the old theory of "praedestinatio ex praevisis meritis," which had the advantage of making man's final destiny depend on the action of his own free will. God elects those who He foresees will persevere in faith and good works; He reprobates those who He foresees will refuse to be converted. Predestination, according to this view, is grounded on Divine prescience.[2] But the difficulties of this theory were very great. How, for instance, by such an explanation, was it possible to reconcile the damnation of infants dying unbaptized—an accepted doctrine of the Church—with the absolute justice of God? "Two little ones," says Gregory, "come to this light. To one it is granted to return to redemption by baptism; the other is taken away before it is washed by the regenerating water. And the son of believing parents is often cut off without faith, while that of unbelievers is often renewed by the grant of the sacrament of faith. Perhaps some may say that God knew that the former would act wickedly even after baptism, and on that account did not bring him to the grace of baptism. But if this is so, then undoubtedly we have an instance of sins being punished even before they are committed. And what

[1] *Mor.* xviii. 43.

[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 8: "Electos nominat (Deus), quia cernit quod in fide et bono opere persistant." [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* v. 4, c. 59: "Loca etenim daemonum sunt, quia divina praescientia in habitaculum Dei praeordinati non sunt. Qui ergo non praedestinati sunt, sive audiant doctorum verba, sive non audiant, vocari in Dei habitaculum nequeunt, quia per nequitiam, in qua sunt ante constitutionem mundi praecogniti, locum in se malignis spiritibus paraverunt." *Mor.* xii. 6; xviii. 46.

right-thinking man would say that Almighty God, who releases some from the sins they have committed, yet condemns in others these very sins even when not committed?"[1] This, among other considerations, led Gregory to distrust the theory of predestination through prescience, and to incline to the Augustinian view that predestination depends solely on God's good pleasure and unconditional decree. All is determined by the power of an all-just Creator, "who in a wonderful manner has both chosen some beforehand and justly leaves some in their own wicked habits."[2] The elect are but executing outwardly what has been already settled by the secret counsel of God.[3] But neither did the Augustinian theory satisfy Gregory. Hence he left the matter unsettled, content to call attention, on the one hand, to the predetermining will of God, but, on the other hand, laying strong emphasis on human responsibility. "Predestination to the eternal kingdom," he says, "is so disposed by Almighty God that His elect attain to it by labour, in that by their prayers they merit to receive that which Almighty God determined before all worlds to give them."[4] These Divine judgments are inscrutable, and should be reverenced with humility, and not pried into with idle curiosity.[5] "Let no one then discuss why one man is drawn on, as of free gift, and another man repelled according to desert." One thing alone is certain, that nothing can be unjust which is done by the Just One.[6]

Gregory's views on the subject of predestination were further complicated by his acceptance of the Augustinian doctrine of a "certus numerus electorum"[7]; and it seems that he would have accepted also Augustine's interpretation of 1 Tim. ii. 4. The grace of the Spirit, he says, is given to "all men," inasmuch as it is given to men of every class and character.[8]

Reprobation. Of Reprobation Gregory gives the following account. God "reprobates" a man when He leaves him to himself

[1] *Mor.* xxvii. 7.

[2] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 38. In *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* v. 3 c. 22, the author says: "Praedestinare facere est, et apud ipsum iam facta sunt, quae ab ipso fieri praeordinata sunt. Unde et de eo scriptum est: *Fecit quae futura sunt.*"

[3] *Ibid.* xii. 6; xviii. 43.

[4] *Dial.* i. 8.

[5] *Mor.* x. 6, 7; xxvii. 6; xxviii. 16; xxix. 77.

[6] *Ibid.* xxv. 32.

[7] *Ibid.* xxv. 20.

[8] *Ibid.* vi. 21.

and withholds His grace from him. For man so abandoned can only do such works as merit damnation; nature unaided works its own ruin.[1] God's work in reprobation is thus purely negative. He does not fashion the mind of man to sin, but He does not liberate it from its sin.[2] Hence all expressions in Holy Scripture which speak of God as active for reprobation, must be understood in a negative sense. Thus God "hardens" the heart when He does not soften it[3]; He "shuts up" the man whom His grace does not liberate[4]; He "deprives" when He does not give.[5] He just leaves a man where he has fallen, not correcting his faults or restraining his evil habits,[6] but allowing his sins to accumulate against the day of vengeance.[7] And in this God acts with perfect justice. The reprobate have done no good to merit God's mercy, and therefore He is under no obligation to spare them. The fact that by His grace He wills to redeem the elect, imposes on Him no necessity of extending that saving grace to all. Some, indeed, He rescues in mercy, but He is none the less just because He deals out to others the punishment they have merited.[8] Nor must we inquire into the reason why God withholds from so many His saving grace. Reprobation, like predestination, is a mystery which the human mind cannot attempt to penetrate.[9]

The Justice and Mercy of God in Predestination and Reprobation. Gregory adds that it must not be thought that God shows mercy to the elect without justice, or justice to the reprobate without mercy. The elect, as well as the reprobate, experience God's justice. For their sins are never remitted without punishment, whether in the form of self-imposed penance or of Divine chastisement. They are educated by adversity, and brought near to God by persecution and trouble. On the other hand, the reprobate experience God's mercy. God for the moment overlooks their sin, and lets them prosper in all

[1] *Mor.* xi. 12: "Omnipotens Deus humanum cor destruit cum relinquit, aedificat dum replet. Neque enim humanam mentem debellando destruit, sed recedendo, quia ad perditionem suam sufficit sibi dimissa."

[2] *Ibid.* xxix. 60.

[3] *Ibid.* xi. 13; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 11, § 25.

[4] *Mor.* xi. 12.

[5] *Ibid.* xxxi. 26.

[6] *Ibid.* xviii. 43.

[7] *Ibid.* xxv. 22, 23.

[8] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 39.

[9] *Ibid.* x. 6, 7; xxv. 32; xxvii. 7; xxix. 33, 57, 77.

their evil undertakings, "here patiently enduring those whom hereafter He condemns for ever."[1]

The Uncertainty of Salvation. Like Augustine, Gregory teaches that a man can never be certain whether or no he is the subject of saving grace.[2] For often he mistakes for a gift of grace something that is destined to be the instrument of his destruction, and fancies that God is most favourable just when He is most angry.[3] "Very often that is rendered grace to us which we call wrath; and that is sometimes wrath which we deem to be grace."[4] The attainment of virtue itself may be but the beginning of a man's fall; and our best deeds may be the most displeasing to our Judge.[5] "We know that we are called; we know not whether we are chosen."[6] "No one knows what is being determined concerning him in the secret judgments of God, because *many are called, but few are chosen.* Since, therefore, no one can be certain whether he is chosen, all must tremble, all must fear for their deeds, all must take delight in God's mercy alone, and none must presume on his own strength."[7] Thus Gregory tends to set up fear and hope instead of faith and love as guiding principles of conduct. At the same time, he is most careful to point out that man, even when most despairing of himself, may confide securely in the power of his Redeemer. "Not in our tears, nor in our actions, but in the pleading of our Advocate should be our trust."[8] More will be said on this subject in the section on Penance.

Gregory once more follows Augustine in closely connecting his doctrine of Grace with his doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments. For both these Fathers the Church is the organism of grace—the medium through which the individual believer may be brought into personal relationship with God, and may receive the grace which He bestows. Hence, as the doctrine of Man leads up to the doctrine of Grace, so the doctrine of Grace finds its necessary supplement in the doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments.

[1] *Mor.* xxi. 8; xxxiii. 39.
[2] *Ibid.* xxix. 34.
[3] *Ibid.* ix. 20.
[4] *Ibid.* v. 16.
[5] *Ibid.* iii. 24; v. 12; xii. 26.
[6] *Hom. in Ev.* 38, § 14; cf. 19, § 6.
[7] *Ibid.* 38, § 16.
[8] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 24.

Section III.—The Doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments.

(1) *The Church.*

The doctrine of the Church, which Augustine, following Optatus, and on the basis of Cyprian's conception, had formulated against the Donatists, is taken over by Gregory entire. To the elucidation of the difficulties and obscurities of the doctrine, however, he contributes little. His treatment of the subject is lacking in scientific precision, and he omits to supply any definition of the Church, but, like Augustine, is content to apply the term loosely sometimes to all those who participate in the sacraments, sometimes to the elect of these, sometimes to all predestined to salvation, including those who are not yet members of the empirical Church. As a summary of Augustine's views, however, Gregory's exposition is valuable.

Names for the Church. "No one is ignorant," says Gregory, "that the Holy Church is the City of the Lord."[1] The stones of its building are the saints, who are all closely joined to one another in the bonds of mutual charity. The foundation is Christ, on whom the whole building is based, and by whom it is lifted up to heaven.[2] Elsewhere Gregory calls the Church the Kingdom of Heaven, in that the Church already reigns in her Lord by heavenly conversation.[3] Elsewhere, again, he designates the Church the Robe of Christ, the souls of individual believers being called in turn the robe of the Church.[4] Most commonly, however, Gregory refers to the Church as the Body of Christ, who is said to be "One Person with the assembly of the good; for He is Himself the Head of the Body, and we are all the Body of this Head."[5] The union between the Head and the Body is so intimate that Christ still suffers many things in His Body, while the Church already glories in her Head in heaven.[6] From Him she receives all her vital powers, and through Him she has confident hope of eternal rewards.[7]

[1] *Mor.* xxv. 21.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 1, §§ 5, 8.
[3] *Mor.* xxxiii. 34.
[4] *Ibid.* xx. 58; xxix. 13.
[5] *Mor.* Praef. 14; iv. 18; xix. 22; xx. 8; xxiii. 2; xxxv. 24; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* v. 1.
[6] *Mor.* iii. 25.
[7] *Ibid.* xiii. 27.

Characteristics of the Church. The Church is the dwelling-place of the Spirit, and is constituted by the congregations of the true faith scattered throughout the world.[1] Its characteristics are the following:—

(i.) The Church is One. Its unity, of which the guarantee is its relation to Christ as its Head, depends on faith and love. On the one hand, amid a diversity of customs, there is but one faith.[2] On the other hand, its members, though fulfilling diverse functions, are bound together by mutual love, so that each works for all and appropriates the work of all.[3] Faith and love, then, weld together the scattered Churches, and the scattered members of each Church, into the Body of Christ, which, together with its Head, constitutes One Person. This unity, of course, is compatible with the greatest diversity, and, indeed, implies it. For just as the idea of a body implies diversity of function on the part of its members, so the idea of the Church is that of harmony in difference.[4] Hence among the members of the Church we find diversity of gifts; some being endowed with knowledge, others with miracles, but none possessing all the gifts of the Spirit.[5] We find, again, diversity of merits. Some attain only to the lower plane of virtue—not to desire what belongs to others, to bear injuries, to be content with what they have, to live humbly; others reach a higher level—to surrender what they possess, to despise the things of this world, to love their enemies, to subject the flesh to the reason, to rise in contemplation.[6] We find also diversity of function and rank. There are preachers and hearers, rulers and subjects[7]; there are the three great orders (to which Gregory is constantly referring) of the pastors, the continent, and those who live honourably in marriage.[8] And as with the individual members of each Church, so it is with the several Churches scattered throughout the world. All have their own peculiarities and diversities, yet all are so compacted together

[1] *Mor.* xvi. 68; xvii. 43; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 3, § 12.
[2] *Mor.* vi. 50; *Epp.* i. 41; xi. 56*a*.
[3] *Mor.* xix. 43, 44.
[4] *Ibid.* xxviii. 23.
[5] *Ibid.* xxviii. 24; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, §§ 32, 34.
[6] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 17.
[7] *Mor.* xxx. 23.
[8] *Mor.* i. 20; xxx. 23; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 10; ii. 1, § 7; ii. 4, § 5; ii. 7, § 3.

through faith and love that they form a Church which is One.[1]

Included in this one Church Gregory reckons all the faithful who lived before the coming of Christ. "With the blood of Abel," he says, "began the passion of the Church, and the Church of the elect before and after Christ is one."[2] The saints of the Old Testament had the same hope and faith as we; and they were saved by their faith in the future passion and resurrection of Christ, as we by the same passion and resurrection that are now past. They loved and believed in Christ before He came; we after His coming.[3] Moreover, they were one with us in their faith in the Holy Trinity, and in their exercise of the three virtues necessary to salvation—faith, hope, and love.[4] They preached with us the sevenfold grace of the Spirit, and eternal retribution and reward.[5] They, like us, were distinguished into three orders of pastors or preachers, the continent, and those who led a good life in wedlock.[6] In heart and life and doctrine they maintained the same "sacraments of faith" as we. Hence, though separated in time, they are not divided from the Church whose glory they foresaw.[7] The unity of the Church, then, comprehends all true believers of the past, the present, and the future, from Abel to the last just man who shall be born into the world. And although we may distinguish five ages of the Church—namely, from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Abraham; from Abraham to Moses; from Moses to Christ; from Christ to the end—yet in all the ages the Church itself is one and the same.[8]

Excluded from the Church are heretics, who are sundered from its unity by errors of faith; and schismatics, who are sundered by defective love.[9] Heretics, indeed, are deficient not only in faith but also in love; for they who think wrongly about God do not love God, and they who obstinately contend on behalf of their wrong opinions do not love their neighbour.[10] This defect of faith and love renders nugatory all the good works of heretics—whatever they do is without merit.[11] It also betrays them into positive sins, such as spiritual pride in the

[1] *Mor.* xvi. 68.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 3, § 16.
[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 5, § 2.
[4] *Ibid.* ii. 4, § 4.
[5] *Ibid.* ii. 8, § 2.
[6] *Ibid.* ii. 4, § 5.
[7] *Ibid.* ii. 3, § 16.
[8] *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 1.
[9] *Mor.* xviii. 42.
[10] *Mor.* xx. 17.
[11] *Mor.* xx. 16.

midst of spiritual blindness,[1] avarice,[2] malice.[3] Heretics now persecute the Church with their false contentions, and at the end of the world they will add open violence; but both persecutions shall be turned to the good of the Church, since the one will exercise her wisdom and the other her patience.[4] Schismatics are less reprehensible than heretics, for they hold the true faith. Yet they too are excluded from the Church, because they have not love. Both these classes, then, being severed from the Church, are also separated from Christ and are outside the sphere of operation of the Holy Spirit. Hence they cannot hope for salvation, which is to be found only within the Church.

Gregory is very clear on this last point. He says: "The holy universal Church proclaims that God cannot truly be worshipped save within herself, and asserts that all they who are without her pale shall never be saved."[5] No sacrifices are accepted of God,[6] no prayers are heard,[7] no forgiveness of sins is obtained, save through the merits and intercession of the one Catholic Church.[8] "For it is the Church alone through which God willingly accepts a sacrifice, the Church alone which intercedes with confidence for those that are in error. The true Sacrifice of the Redeemer is offered only in the one Catholic Church. It is the Church alone in which a good work is fruitfully carried on. It is the Church alone which guards those who are within it by the strong bond of charity. It is the Church alone in which we truly contemplate heavenly mysteries. For truth shines forth from the Catholic Church alone."[9] Good works,[10] then, innocence and obedience,[11] perfection and eternal life,[12] are not to be had by any who are outside the Church. Even the merit of martyrdom is denied them. For though heretics and schismatics suffer in the name of Christ, they are not purified by their suffering. Their sins are punished, but not purged away, and all their torment is void of merit or saving efficacy.[13] "Martyrem non facit poena sed causa."[14] Hence, though a man display heroic deeds, faith of a

[1] *Mor.* xx. 19.
[2] *Ibid.* xx. 21.
[3] *Ibid.* xx. 24.
[4] *Ibid.* xviii. 3; xix. 16.
[5] *Ibid.* xiv. 5.
[6] *Ibid.* Praef. 17.
[7] *Ibid.* xxxv. 12.
[8] *Ibid.* xviii. 42.
[9] *Ibid.* xxxv. 13.
[10] *Ibid.* xx. 16.
[11] *Ibid.* xxxv. 33.
[12] [Greg.] *Exp. super Cantica Canticorum* vi. 9.
[13] *Mor.* xviii. 41, 42.
[14] Quoted in *Epp.* ii. 49.

sort, and even miracles, he is none the less without hope of salvation, if he be not joined to the one Church, which gives the saving stamp to all.

(ii.) The Church is Holy. Through its union with Christ, and through the operation of the Holy Spirit the Church possesses an ideal sanctity, which is not impaired by the fact that of its actual members the majority are reprobate.[1] So long as the Church remains in the world, it will be a mixed body. For nowhere are there only good save in heaven; and nowhere only bad save in hell. In the Church on earth, therefore, there cannot be good without evil or evil without good.[2] And this mixture, besides being in accord with the nature of things, serves a good and necessary purpose. For the bad could not be converted save by the example of the good, nor the good perfectly purified except through the temptations of the wicked.[3] This last consideration is frequently emphasized by Gregory. "I suspect," he says, "that there is no Abel who has not a Cain for his brother. For if the good were without the wicked they could not be perfectly good, since they would not be purged. The very society of the wicked is the purgation of the good."[4] And again: "To a just man there is joined a sinner together with wickedness, just as in the furnace there is added to the gold straw along with fire, that in proportion as the straw burns the gold may be purified. Those, then, are truly good who can persevere in goodness even in the midst of the evil."[5] Thus for the perfecting of the elect, the Church receives into her bosom a yet greater multitude who are children of perdition. Gregory roughly distinguishes the latter into three classes. There are some who feign to believe the Church's teaching, but are in secret unbelievers, and when the time of persecution comes openly gainsay it.[6] There are others who are sound in faith but corrupt in practice, either shamelessly indulging all their carnal lusts, or else, while preserving the form of respectability, devoting themselves heart and soul to worldly objects.[7] There are yet others, who are sound in faith and not wholly bad in practice, but who are yet so weak that they cannot refrain from

[1] *Mor.* xxv. 21; xxvi. 76; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 4, § 17; *Hom. in Ev.* 38, § 8.
[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 38, § 7.
[3] *Mor.* xxxi. 28.
[4] *Epp.* xi. 27.
[5] *Mor.* xx. 76; cf. *Hom. in Ev.* 38, § 8.
[6] *Mor.* xiii. 11.
[7] *Ibid.* viii. 23.

imitating the wicked.[1] With all these unworthy members the Church maintains a conflict, even more painful than that which she wages against overt enemies. "For Holy Church cannot pass through the season of her pilgrimage without the labour of temptation, and, though she has no open enemies without, yet she endures false brethren within. For she is ever in array against sin, and, even in time of peace, she has her own contest." [2]

In spite, however, of these impure elements externally associated with her, the Church herself is holy. (*a*) For one thing, she has holy members, since all the elect of all times belong to the Church; and in the strong members the Church makes atonement for the lapses of the weak. "Holy Church, when she withdraws her weak members from sin, and leads them to the remedy of penance, aids them effectually with her tears, that they may recover strength to receive the grace of their Maker; and through her strong members who have done no evil she bewails the evil that in her weak members she has done." [3] (*b*) Again, the Church is holy, because by her preaching and discipline she converts sinners into holy members of herself. Gregory compares the Church to a lioness, to whom God says, *Kill and eat.* "For what is slain is killed out of life, and that which is eaten is changed into the body of the eater. Hence it is said, *Kill and eat;* that is, 'Kill sinners to the sin in which they are living, and convert them from themselves into thine own members.'" [4] (*c*) Once more, the Church is holy, because within the Church alone can holiness be attained, and by the Church alone are the means of holiness provided.[5] (*d*) Lastly, the Church is holy, because after the judgment her whole membership will be holy. Although at present the reprobate are mingled with the elect, and appear to be equally members of the Church, yet the true Church—the Church known to God—consists solely of the elect. This true Church will be openly manifested at the judgment, when all who are not elect will be rooted out.[6] Then the Church will be actually and completely holy, and will be seen in the perfect beauty of the likeness to her Creator.[7]

[1] *Mor.* xiii. 9. [2] *Ibid.* xxxi. 10. [3] *Ibid.* xiii. 22.
[4] *Ibid.* xviii. 56. [5] *Ibid.* xxxv. 13.
[6] *Ibid.* xxxi. 28; cf. xx. 43. [7] *Ibid.* ix. 18.

(iii.) The Church is Catholic, being extended over the globe and not confined to any part of it. The various Churches scattered through the world together constitute the one Catholic Church.[1]

(iv.) The Church is Apostolic. On the one hand, the Church preserves the Apostolic doctrine, and, though her dogmas have been gradually elaborated, they are all based and grounded on the teaching of the Apostles.[2] On the other hand, the Church is of Apostolic foundation, and is connected with the Apostles by an uninterrupted episcopal succession.[3] Gregory teaches that the Church was originally committed to St. Peter. "To all who know the Gospels," he says, "it is plain that to St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, our Lord committed the care of the whole Church."[4] On the Bishop of Rome, therefore, as the successor of St. Peter, there devolved a primacy, not only of rank, but also of authority over the whole Church,[5] both in West and East.[6] This authority, however, was only to be exercised for the preservation of the Catholic Faith, and to secure observance of the canons, whenever heresy or improper proceedings called for intervention. Gregory writes: "If any fault is found in bishops, I know of no bishop who is not subject to the Apostolic See. But when no fault requires it to be otherwise, all bishops, according to the principle of humility, are equal."[7]

The Church as the Authority for Doctrine. The Church, according to Gregory, is the custodian and interpreter of Holy Scripture. Only by her help can men arrive at a full and true understanding of revealed teaching. She alone can explain the obscure sayings of the Old Testament,[8] or draw out the full meaning of the brief testimonies of the New.[9] Within the Church alone can the great interior truths of revelation be discovered, for the Church alone is gifted for this purpose with wisdom from on high.[10] Further, all that the Church knows she publishes without concealment. She makes no pretence,

[1] *Mor.* xvi. 68; xvii. 43; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 3, § 12.
[2] *Mor.* xxvii. 14, 15.
[3] *Ibid.* iv. 61, 62.
[4] *Epp.* v. 37; cf. *Mor.* xvii. 37; xxvi. 45.
[5] *Epp.* vii. 37.
[6] *Epp.* ix. 26. On this see more above, pp. 224, 225.
[7] *Epp.* ix. 27; cf. above, p. 225, 226.
[8] *Mor.* xviii. 60.
[9] *Ibid.* xxvii. 14, 15.
[10] *Ibid.* xviii. 18.

like the heretics, to secret knowledge. "She does not teach one thing in public and keep another thing to herself in secret. But she both declares openly what she thinks, and keeps what she declares by living in accord therewith."[1]

As contrasted with the teaching of heretics, the doctrine of the Church is sane and self-consistent, and keeps a safe path between extremes. Gregory illustrates this statement in the following manner: "Arius, recognizing Three Persons in the Godhead, believed also in Three Gods; Sabellius, on the contrary, recognizing One God, believed that there was One Person. Between whom Holy Church holds unswervingly the right pathway of her teaching, and, in proclaiming One God, asserts against Sabellius Three Persons, and, in asserting Three Persons, confesses against Arius One God. Again, Manichaeus, finding virginity commended in Scripture, condemned marriage; while Jovinian, knowing marriage to be allowed, despised the purity of virginity. So heretics are confused by their perverse understanding, and their wickedness is at the same time at one with itself in sin and at variance with itself in opinion. But Holy Church moves composedly midway between the disputes of either side. She knows how to receive the higher good, and at the same time to venerate the lower, neither putting the lowest on a level with the highest, nor in veneration of the highest despising the lowest."[2]

This doctrine the Church teaches with authority. It is true that she does not disregard the claims of the human reason. "Holy Church," says Gregory, "being trained in the school of humility, does not enjoin by absolute authority the right instruction she delivers, but requires faith on rational grounds of conviction. And even when she speaks of things which cannot be comprehended by reason, she rationally advises that human reason should not be eager to fathom what is hidden."[3] Yet it is to faith that the Church primarily appeals. Many of her doctrines she cannot herself understand[4]; others she deliberately refuses to elucidate, that her feeble members may not be puffed up with the pride of knowledge.[5] For it is with her a principle that ignorance with humility is to be

[1] *Mor.* viii. 7; cf. v. 45.
[2] *Ibid.* xix. 27.
[3] *Ibid.* viii. 3.
[4] *Ibid.* xiv. 32.
[5] *Ibid.* xvi. 8.

preferred to knowledge accompanied by pride.[1] Therefore she requires of her sons that they should accept her dogmas with unquestioning faith; every act of faith becoming thus at the same time an act of obedience. Hence the true children of the Church "keep silence, in that they dare not impugn her words, but receive them with faith. For that they may profit by these words, they hear them, not to criticize, but to obey."[2]

The Relation of the Church to the State. Like Augustine, Gregory taught that the State must be in alliance with the Kingdom of God, and must use its power for the furtherance of Divine law and worship. Earthly rulers are entrusted with the task of preserving the "pax fidei."[3] Theirs it is to maintain law and order in the Church, to guard its secular interests, and to compel its enemies, whether pagans, schismatics, or heretics, to submit to its authority. Gregory dwells principally on this last function. Although he himself was inclined in the first instance to try gentle measures for conversion, and although —at any rate in the case of the Jews—he more than once protested against persecuting violence,[4] yet he approved the general principle of religious coercion, and himself at times invoked for this purpose the help of the secular arm.[5] He held it to be a matter for congratulation that in the time of the Emperor Maurice "the mouths of heretics are stopped."[6] But beyond such measures, which were in the interest of the Church, the State, according to Gregory, had no right to interfere in things ecclesiastical. On the other hand, as his *Epistles* show, Gregory equally disapproved of ecclesiastics mingling in secular affairs. If they interfered, it was to be only for the discharge of their necessary duties as guardians of Christian justice—to resist some flagrant wrong, or to protect the poor, the weak, and the oppressed. If they themselves exercised secular authority, it was only to be such as was forced upon them, which they could not conscientiously refuse, and which they would gladly lay aside when opportunity offered. In all things unconnected with religion they were bound to obey the

[1] *Mor.* xiv. 32; [Greg.] *Super Cantica Canticorum* i. 16.
[2] *Mor.* xx. 2.
[3] *Mor.* xxxi. 8.
[4] *Epp.* i. 34, 45; ii. 6; viii. 25; ix. 38, 195; xiii. 15.
[5] *Ibid.* i. 72; iii. 59; iv. 26, 32; v. 7; vi. 61; viii. 4, 19.
[6] *Ibid.* ix. 135; xi. 28.

secular authorities; and even in matters which trenched upon religion, they were at liberty to remonstrate indeed, but not to disobey, unless obedience involved positive sin. Gregory's rule is: "Quod imperator fecerit, si canonicum est, sequimur: si vero canonicum non est, in quantum sine peccato nostro, portamus."[1]

(2) *The Sacraments.*

Although Gregory must certainly have been acquainted with Augustine's views concerning the nature and operation of the sacraments, he makes no allusion to them. Nor does he attempt, for his own part, to supply a doctrine of the conception or number of the sacraments. He passes over the subject in absolute silence. It is to be noted, however, that he still retains the older use of the term "sacramentum" in the sense of a sacred truth or sacred rite of mystic meaning; while in the restricted, technical sense he appears to apply the word only to Baptism (*sacramentum fidei*) and the Eucharist (called simply *sacramentum* or *mysterium Redemptoris*). Of his teaching on these two Sacraments the following is an outline.

(*a*) *Baptism.* Gregory dwells principally on the negative aspect of Baptism as the means of the forgiveness of sins. In the first place, Baptism delivers us from the guilt of original sin. "For whoever is not absolved by the water of regeneration is tied and bound by the guilt of the original bond."[2] For this he must suffer the punishment of eternal torments, even though he has never committed actual sin. Baptism, however, removes the guilt and remits the punishment.[3] Secondly, Baptism cleanses adults not only from original, but also from actual sin. Gregory asserts very emphatically that all previous sins are completely remitted to those who are baptized in faith. He quotes the words of Christ: *He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit;* and compares the baptized to the Israelites who, when they passed through the Red Sea, left their old enemies dead behind them. Nevertheless, just as new enemies awaited the Israelites in the desert, so fresh temptations assault the baptized after their Baptism.[4]

[1] *Epp.* xi. 29. For a full discussion of Gregory's attitude, see above, p. 238 *sqq.*

[2] *Mor.* iv. Praef. 3.

[3] *Mor.* ix. 32; xv. 57.

[4] *Epp.* xi. 27.

The sins ensuing may be washed away by the "second baptism" of tears and penance.[1] But Baptism itself, if once rightly administered in the name of the Trinity, cannot be repeated.[2]

Gregory does not entirely ignore the positive effect of Baptism. He asserts that through it men come to the faith and receive the grace of the Spirit and the adornment of virtues.[3] But he does not dwell on this side of the question, nor does he make it clear whether such positive grace is imparted to all the baptized or to adults alone.

With respect to the symbolism of Baptism, Gregory affirms that trine immersion may signify the three days spent by Christ in the tomb, or else the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity: a single immersion indicates the unity of God. Either form of Baptism is permissible.[4]

(*b*) *The Eucharist.* Gregory regards the Eucharist both as a Sacrament and as a Sacrifice. Viewing it as a Sacrament, he believes in the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist—a Presence, still undefined, but conceived as real. The Blood of the Lamb, he says, is taken both with the mouth of the heart and with the mouth of the body. We receive the Sacrament of His Passion with the mouth for our redemption.[5] Gregory, however, makes no attempt to define the kind or mode of the Real Presence. His language is throughout extremely vague. He says, for instance: "Bonus pastor pro ovibus suis animam suam posuit, ut in sacramento nostro corpus suum et sanguinem verteret, et oves quas redemerat carnis suae alimento satiaret."[6] And he speaks of Christians desiring "to satisfy their hungry soul with His Flesh, by the daily sacrifice of His immolating."[7] But nothing very definite can be gathered from such phrases; and it is impossible to prove that the doctrine afterwards attributed to him by the biographers accurately represents his teaching.[8]

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 10, § 7; 25, § 10.

[2] *Epp.* xi. 52; *Hom. in Ev.* 10, § 7.

[3] *Mor.* xviii. 87: "Tingimur quippe, et qui prius indecori eramus deformitate vitiorum, accepta fide reddimur pulchri gratia et ornamento virtutum." [Greg.] *Super Cantica Canticorum* iv. 10, 20.

[4] *Epp.* i. 41. See above, Vol. I. pp. 411, 412.

[5] *Hom. in Ev.* 22, § 7.

[6] *Ibid.* 14, § 1.

[7] *Mor.* xxii. 26.

[8] *S. Gallen Life* 20; Paul. Diac. *Vita* c. 23; Joh. Diac. *Vita* ii. c. 41. Paul

On the Sacrifice of the Eucharist Gregory's statements are much more definite, and here, at any rate, his teaching has become the standard. He maintains with perfect clearness that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice; a Sacrifice, moreover, which is not merely figurative and commemorative of the Sacrifice of Christ, but a renewal of it; a Sacrifice, lastly, which is of peculiar efficacy both for the living and the dead. Thus he writes: "The Sacrifice of the holy altar, when offered with tears and kindliness of heart, contributes peculiarly to our absolution. For He who in Himself, being risen from the dead, dieth no more, still through this Sacrifice in His own mystery suffers again for us. For as often as we offer unto Him the Sacrifice of His Passion, so often do we renew to ourselves His Passion for our absolution."[1] Again, in a passage which has become famous, he says: "We ought to immolate to God the daily sacrifices of our tears, the daily offerings of His Flesh and Blood. For this Victim peculiarly preserves the soul from eternal death, as it renews to us in a mystery the death of the Only-begotten; who, although being risen from the dead He dieth no more and death shall have no more dominion over Him, yet, while in Himself He liveth immortal and incorruptible, for us is immolated again in this mystery of the sacred Oblation. For it is His Body that there is taken, His Flesh that is divided for the salvation of the people, His Blood that is poured, not as before into the hands of unbelievers, but into the mouths of the faithful. Hence let us estimate the importance of this Sacrifice for us, which for our absolution ever imitates the Passion of the Only-begotten Son. For what Christian man can doubt that at the very hour of the offering, at the words of the priest, the heavens are opened, the choirs of angels are present in that mystery of Jesus Christ,

makes Gregory say: "Disce, inquam, Veritati vel modo iam credere contestanti: *Panis quem ego do caro mea est, et sanguis meus vere est potus.* Sed praescius Conditor noster infirmitatis nostrae, ea potestate qua cuncta fecit ex nihilo et corpus sibi ex carne semper Virginis operante Spiritu sancto fabricavit, panem et vinum aqua mistum, manente propria specie, in carnem et sanguinem suum ad catholicam precem ob reparationem nostram Spiritus sui sanctificatione convertit."

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 37, § 7: "Singulariter ad absolutionem nostram oblata cum lacrymis et benignitate mentis sacri altaris hostia suffragatur, quia is qui in se resurgens a mortuis iam non moritur, adhuc per hanc in suo mysterio pro nobis iterum patitur. Nam quoties ei hostiam suae passionis offerimus, toties nobis ad absolutionem nostram passionem illius reparamus."

the lowest things are knit with the highest, the earthly things are united with the heavenly, the visible and the invisible are made one?"[1] The offering of this Sacrifice, Gregory teaches, frees the living not merely from the penalties of sin, but also from temporal suffering and inconvenience (for example, imprisonment, shipwreck, bodily ailments).[2] It also has peculiar efficacy in releasing from the pains of purgatory the souls of those who have died in venial sin. Gregory tells two curious stories to illustrate this. One is of a monk of his own Monastery of St. Andrew, who was liberated from purgatory after that masses had been offered for his soul for thirty consecutive days; the other is of a presbyter of Civitavecchia, who was delivered when masses had been said for him for a week.[3]

At the same time, while emphasizing the efficacy of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, Gregory (following Augustine) insists on the necessity for self-sacrifice on the part of the believer, and

[1] *Dial.* iv. 58: "Debemus praesens saeculum vel quia iam conspicimus defluxisse tota mente contemnere, quotidiana Deo lacrymarum sacrificia, quotidianas carnis eius et sanguinis hostias immolare. Haec namque singulariter victima ab aeterno interitu animam salvat, quae illam nobis mortem Unigeniti per mysterium reparat, qui licet resurgens a mortuis iam non moritur, et mors ei ultra non dominabitur, tamen in semetipso immortaliter atque incorruptibiliter vivens, pro nobis iterum in hoc mysterio sacrae oblationis immolatur. Eius quippe ibi corpus sumitur, eius caro in populi salutem partitur, eius sanguis non iam in manus infidelium, sed in ora fidelium funditur. Hinc ergo pensemus quale sit pro nobis hoc sacrificium, quod pro absolutione nostra passionem unigeniti Filii semper imitatur. Quis enim fidelium habere dubium possit, in ipsa immolationis hora ad sacerdotis vocem coelos aperiri, in illo Iesu Christi mysterio angelorum choros adesse, summis ima sociari, terrena coelestibus iungi, unumque ex visibilibus atque invisibilibus fieri?" It should be noticed in the above (1) that Gregory teaches, not that the Eucharist is an objective repetition of the Sacrifice of the Passion, but that it is a renewal of it in its application to us: "*nobis* mortem Unigeniti per mysterium reparat"; (2) that Gregory does not sanction the view of the Eucharist "as a high Sacrifice rather than as Communion." Observe his language: "Eius ibi corpus *sumitur*, . . . eius sanguis . . . *in ora fidelium funditur*."

[2] *Dial.* iv. 57; cf. iii. 3.

[3] *Ibid.* iv. 55: "Si culpae post mortem insolubiles non sunt, multum solet animas etiam post mortem sacra oblatio hostiae salutaris adiuvare." So also *ibid.* 57: "Sciendum est quia illis sacrae victimae mortuis prosint, qui hic vivendo obtinuerunt ut eos etiam post mortem bona adiuvent, quae hic pro ipsis ab aliis fiunt." Compare *ibid.* ii. 23, 24, where dead bodies rest quiet in their graves after that the Oblation was made for them, or the Host laid upon the breast. For those who died in mortal sin the Eucharist is of no avail (*ibid.* iv. 44). For the souls of the blessed it is not required.

he closely connects the outward Sacrifice with the whole bent and tendency of the inward life. "It is necessary, while we do these things," writes Gregory, "that we should offer ourselves a sacrifice in penitence of heart. For while we celebrate the mysteries of the Lord's Passion, we are bound to imitate what we celebrate. Then will it be truly a sacrifice to God for us, when we have made ourselves a sacrifice."[1] This sacrifice of ourselves is to be made through penitence, through self-discipline, and above all through forgiveness of injuries; and Gregory concludes: "I say with confidence that we shall have no need of the Saving Victim after our death, if before our death we have been ourselves a victim to God."[2] Again, in referring to the Paschal feast, Gregory writes: "What the blood of the lamb is you have learnt, no longer by hearing of it, but by drinking it. And this blood is put upon the two door-posts, when it is drunk not only with the bodily mouth, but with the mouth of the heart. For the Blood of the Lamb is put upon both door-posts when the sacrament of His Passion is both taken with the mouth for our redemption and is also carefully considered for imitation. For he who receives the Blood of his Redeemer without being willing to imitate His Passion, puts the Blood only on one door-post. . . . But the mere reception of the sacraments of our Redeemer does not suffice unless good works also be added. For of what avail is it to receive with the mouth His Body and Blood, if we offend Him with our evil conduct?"[3] So also, in another place, he says: "That the Sacrament of our Lord's Passion may not be ineffectual in us, we are bound to imitate that which we take, and to preach to others what we adore."[4] Thus, then, Gregory connects the conception of an outward Sacrifice with the moral idea of self-sacrifice on the part of the redeemed. The sacrifice of Christ is only efficacious for those who participate in it by sacrificing themselves.

[1] *Dial.* iv. 59.
[2] *Ibid.* iv. 60.
[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 22, §§ 7, 8.
[4] *Mor.* xiii. 26; cf. [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 1, 14.

Section IV.—The Doctrine of Penance and Purgatory.

(1) *Penance.*

The underlying principle of Gregory's doctrine of Penance is that no sin can be left unpunished. God is represented pre-eminently as the Requiter and Avenger of sin. He is the Judge girded with terrors. When Gregory speaks of the Fatherhood of God, he seems to have had in mind the idea of the old-fashioned Roman paterfamilias, who ruled his family with rigid equity, being kind and considerate towards the obedient and weak, but inexorably stern with the rebellious. It was true that God had in mercy provided an Atonement for mankind, and that He freely offered through His Church the grace by which the blessings of the Atonement might be appropriated. But it was also true that the scrutiny into each man's life was appallingly severe, and that every sin was inevitably followed by punishment, either in this world or in the next. Moreover, eternal penalties could only be averted by temporal suffering—suffering either self-imposed in the form of penance, or imposed on us by God for our good. Thus Gregory writes: "God never spares the offender, in that He never leaves a fault without taking vengeance on it. For either man himself by penance punishes it in himself, or God assisting man in punishment smites it. Thus there is never any sparing of sin, in that it is never loosed without punishment."[1] Elsewhere he says: "There is no means of absolving guilt which is not wiped away by penance."[2]

On this principle of "no sin without punishment," Gregory builds up his doctrine of Penance. He regards penance as the means by which man, through God's grace, may pay the penalties due to his sin, and cancel his guilt by an adequate amount of suffering. For, by the self-punishment of penance, sin is blotted out so that it no longer remains to be judged and punished[3]; man's guilt is done away,[4] his original righteousness is restored to him,[5] and the seeds of virtue are sown in him.[6]

[1] *Mor.* ix. 54; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* iv. 8.
[2] *Mor.* xvi. 82.
[3] *Ibid.* iv. 27, 28, 36; ix. 67, 68; xxv. 11; xxxii. 5.
[4] *Ibid.* ix. 83; xvi. 25; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, § 29; *Hom. in Ev.* 20, § 15.
[5] *Mor.* xii. 9; xiv. 42.
[6] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 24; i. 10, § 30.

It is our second baptism: for whereas all previous sins are washed away by baptism, post-baptismal sins are remitted by penance, so that God once more reckons us innocent.[1] Penance thus supplements baptism, and is no less necessary. It is not sufficient, says Gregory, merely to cease sinning. For mere cessation from sin cannot obliterate past sins, any more than to cease writing can blot out what is already written, or to cease borrowing can discharge a debt. Our sins will continue to stand against us, even if we cease from them, unless we do away with them by penitential suffering. Not, Gregory adds, that God delights in our torments; but, like a good physician, He heals our diseases by applying opposite remedies—pleasures by pain, lawlessness by restraint even in what is lawful.[2]

The Schoolmen taught that Penance consisted in three things—contritio cordis, confessio oris, and satisfactio operis. These distinctions are already found in the *Commentary on the First of Kings*. "In true penance," the author writes, "there are three points to be considered—conversio mentis, confessio oris, vindicta peccati."[3] Here conversio mentis represents contritio cordis in its culmination and complete result: vindicta peccati is the same as satisfactio operis. These three moments in the penitential process are described by Gregory as follows.

(1) *Conversio mentis.* According to Gregory, conversion is the result of a process which begins in the perception of sin, passes on to sorrow for sin springing from fear of God's judgments, and ends in the sorrow which springs from love of God. The first stage is that of perception. "For we then bewail our sins when we begin to reflect on them. But we then more carefully reflect on them when we more anxiously bewail them, and by our lamentations our heart learns more fully what threats Divine severity holds out against sinners, what rebukes will be launched against the reprobate, what terror is in store, what abhorrence of implacable Majesty."[4] The complete perception of sin which produces compunction is attained when a man reflects on his condition from four points of view, namely, when he considers where he was before his sin (original righteousness),

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 10, § 7; 25, § 10.
[2] *Reg. Past.* iii. 30.
[3] [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* vi. 2, c. 33.
[4] *Mor.* xvi. 36.

where he will be in consequence of his sin (hell), where he is (the miseries of this world), and where he is not (heavenly blessedness).[1] Perception of sin thus attained leads to compunction, of which Gregory distinguishes two kinds (roughly corresponding to the "attritio" and "contritio" of the Schoolmen) —the compunction of fear, sorrow springing from terror of God's judgment and future punishment, and the compunction of love. These two kinds of sorrow for sin are described by Gregory as follows: "There are two kinds of compunction—one that fears eternal pains, another that sighs for heavenly rewards. For the soul that is athirst for God is first moved to compunction by fear, and afterwards by love. In the first place, it weeps because, remembering its evil doings, it fears to suffer eternal punishment for them. But when fear has died away in the long anguish of sorrow, a certain security is engendered from a sense of pardon, and the soul is fired with love of heavenly joys. Then he who aforetime wept for fear of punishment afterwards begins to weep most bitterly for that he is kept back from the kingdom. For the soul meditates upon those choirs of angels and the society of blessed spirits, and the vision of the inward brightness of God, and it laments more for the lack of unending good than before it wept when it feared eternal evil. And thus it comes to pass that the compunction of fear, when made perfect, draws the soul on to the compunction of love."[2] The result of this godly sorrow is conversio mentis. And here, once more, Gregory distinguishes three stages. Just as perception of sin, the compunction of fear, and the compunction of love result in conversion, so conversion, when produced, has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The converted man is first soothed and happy; then come contests with temptations; and lastly, the plenitude of perfection. "Sweets are his first portion to comfort him, afterwards bitterness to exercise him, lastly transcendent delights to confirm him." Gregory warns his readers not to mistake the first stage of conversion for the last, or to imagine themselves abandoned by God because after the happiness of the first conversion they are once more afflicted with the assaults of temptation.[3]

(2) *Confessio oris.* Confession, according to Gregory, is the

[1] *Mor.* xxiii. 41.
[2] *Epp.* vii. 23; cf. *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 10, § 20; *Dial.* iii. 34.
[3] *Mor.* xxiv. 28, 29.

natural outcome of true contrition. "For anguish of spirit sets the tongue in motion, so that the voice of confession is levelled against the guilt of evil practice."[1] It is necessary, both to wipe out past sins by self-accusation, and as a preliminary for the reception of renewing grace. "He who lays not open his old deeds by confession, brings not forth the works of a new life. He who knows not how to lament for that which weighs him down, is incapable of producing that which may raise him up."[2] Gregory alludes to the shame and bitterness of confession (itself a punishment of the sin confessed).[3] It is natural to the unregenerate man to hide his sin, by committing it secretly, by denying it when committed, and by defending it when it is proved against him.[4] But so to conceal sin is to lay one's self open to God's accusation and condemnation.[5] On the other hand, confession is useless unless it be accompanied by sincere contrition, just as it is vain to disclose a wound without applying a remedy.[6] True sorrow must be the motive of true confession; and the proof of such sorrow is that a man not only spontaneously confesses his sin, but that he refrains from defending himself when accused by others.[7] In thus emphasizing the necessity of confession, Gregory assumes that it is made, not only to God, but also to the bishop, from whom absolution is obtained.[8] He takes the story of Lazarus

[1] *Mor.* viii. 37.

[2] *Ibid.* xxxi. 93; cf. [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* ii. 1: "Si tegit infirmus vulnera, quomodo illi a medico adhibetur medecina? Nonne si celare vulnus coeperit, latius extensum introrsum putrescit? Sic et peccatum, nisi per confessionem detegatur, lethaliter in intimis dilatatur. Et sicut vulnus non ostensum etiam sanam carnem putredine inficit, ita peccatum nisi confitendo reveletur, etiam si qua ibi sunt bona corrumpit." The same author speaks of the fulness of a good confession (*ibid.* ii. 5): "Ille enim delictum cognitum facit, qui non solum quod fecit annuntiat, sed etiam omnem peccati causam et originem narrat. Qui non superficie tenus peccatum loquitur, sed et quando et ubi et quomodo, et si vel ignorantia vel casu vel studio deliquerit confitetur." The true penitent will offer no excuses for his sin (*ibid.* ii. 6): "Quidquid peccavit non Deo imputat, non Deo annotat, non fortunae attribuit, non diabolo, non constellationi ascribit."

[3] *Mor.* ix. 66, 67.

[4] *Ibid.* xxii. 30.

[5] *Ibid.* xxii. 31.

[6] *Ibid.* viii. 37: [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* vi. 2, 33.

[7] *Mor.* xxii. 33.

[8] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, §§ 4, 5: "Discipuli . . . alienae obligationis potestatem relaxationis accipiunt, principatumque superni iudicii sortiuntur, ut vice Dei

as symbolical of the history of the penitent. Man, dead in sin, is first called and restored to life by Christ. Then he is bidden to *come forth*, that is, to bring to light by confession his hidden sins. Lastly, the disciples are ordered to *loose him and let him go*, in other words, to give him the absolution he has merited by his good confession. This absolution, however, is invalid if it be given by favour and not in accordance with the merits of the case; nor will the withholding of absolution damn a man if such withholding be unjust. Nevertheless, the penitent must stand in awe of the "sentence of the pastor," and must not rebel even though absolution be unjustly withheld.[1] At the same time, Gregory warns those "who occupy the place of judgment" of the danger they incur by the misuse of their powers of binding and loosing[2]; and he bids them also be on their guard, when listening to confessions, lest they themselves be tempted by the sins of which they hear.[3]

(3) *Satisfactio operis.* Although conversion was nominally the most important part of penance, yet, as a matter of fact, Gregory lays equal, if not greater, emphasis on satisfaction—paying the penalty for sin, with a view to escaping eternal punishment. In this penance attains its culmination. Alms,[4] tears, meditation on the shortness of life, asceticism,[5] are "offerings of virtue," which "pay the price of our evil actions" and release us from the debt of sin. And we must, so Gregory teaches, be careful that the payment we make shall balance the debt against us. Our good works must be in proportion to the evil we have done. And the more a man has transgressed in things unlawful, the more must he refrain in

quibusdam peccata retineant, quibusdam relaxent. . . . Horum profecto nunc in ecclesia episcopi locum tenent. Ligandi atque solvendi auctoritatem suscipiunt qui gradum regiminis sortiuntur."

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, §§ 5, 6. Gregory says: "Causae pensandae sunt, et tunc ligandi atque solvendi potestas exercenda. Videndum est quae culpa praecessit, aut quae sit poenitentia secuta post culpam, ut quos omnipotens Deus per compunctionis gratiam visitat, illos pastoris sententia absolvat. Tunc enim vera est absolutio praesidentis, cum interni arbitrium sequitur iudicis." Compare [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* iii. 5, cc. 13, 14.

[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 5.

[3] *Reg. Past.* ii. 5; [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* vi. 2, c. 4.

[4] *Mor.* xii. 57: "Quoties post culpam eleemosynas facimus, quasi pro pravis actibus pretium damus." Cf. *Reg. Past.* iii. 20.

[5] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 10, § 19, etc.

self-punishment from the use of what is lawful. The greater the sin, the greater must be the good work; the worse the disease, the more drastic must be the remedy.[1] Gregory further points out that by paying the price of one sin a man does not receive licence to commit another. True penitence consists in wiping away the sin of the past and also refraining from sin in the future. "Poenitentiam agere est, et perpetrata mala plangere, et plangenda non perpetrare."[2] The author of the *Commentary on Kings* deprecates also vicarious penance. It is vain for a man to expect to be justified through faith and penance performed by others, when he himself often does not even exhibit sorrow. Sins cannot be washed away merely by "the prayers and oblations of priests," but every man for himself must bear the burden of his own sin.[3]

The Uncertainty of Forgiveness. Gregory's doctrine of good works as satisfying penalties for sin involved the conclusion that we can never be certain whether or no our sins are forgiven. For we can never be sure that we have done enough to procure forgiveness. We cannot tell whether we have not overlooked many evil deeds, and left them unatoned for[4]; or whether we have wept sufficiently for the evil deeds of which we have repented[5]; or whether our very good deeds themselves, by which we hoped to propitiate God, were not evil and deserving of punishment instead of reward[6]; or whether, granting that they were good, we shall be able to persevere in them long enough to propitiate God.[7] All is doubtful.[8] Man does not experience forgiveness and salvation; at best he can but hope for it. And there is greater chance that his hope will be realized in proportion as he fears that it will not.[9] Thus Gregory reverts to the standpoint of Tertullian, and sees in fear the basis of salvation. He says, "Anchora cordis est pondus timoris."[10] And he explains himself in a remarkable letter to a lady of Constantinople, who had written to say that she could have no peace until Gregory

[1] *Hom. in Ev.* 20, § 8; 34, § 16; *Reg. Past.* iii. 29.
[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 15.
[3] [Greg.] *Exp. in. Prim. Reg.* vi. 2, c. 27.
[4] *Mor.* xxiv. 32; xxv. 13.
[5] *Ibid.* iv. 71.
[6] *Ibid.* iii. 24; v. 12, 21, 56; xii. 26; xxix. 34.
[7] *Ibid.* v. 11.
[8] *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 6; 38, §§ 14, 16.
[9] *Mor.* xxviii. 20.
[10] *Mor.* vi. 58.

assured her that he knew by Divine revelation that her sins had been forgiven. To this the Pope replied: "You ask for something which is both difficult and useless. It is difficult, because I do not deserve to have a revelation made to me. It is useless, because you ought not to be secure with regard to your sins until the very last day of your life, when you are no longer able to weep for them. Until that day comes you ought to be always mistrustful, always in alarm. You ought always to fear your sins, and to wash them daily with your tears. The Apostle Paul had already ascended to the third heaven, and had been admitted into Paradise, and had heard unspeakable words which it was not lawful for man to utter; yet he was still anxious, and said: *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.* He who has already been taken up into heaven still fears; and shall one who yet dwells on earth have no fear? Consider, my sweet daughter, that security is often the mother of negligence. Therefore, so long as you live, you ought not to have a hope which might make you negligent. During this brief life it is necessary that your mind should be in a state of anxiety, in order that it may hereafter for ever rejoice in the joy of security."[1] At the same time, while condemning self-confidence, Gregory would not have men give way to despondency. "The saints," he says, "so doubt that they trust, and so trust that, notwithstanding, they do not slumber in security."[2] "Before sinning, let man fear God's justice, but after sinning let him presume on His mercy. And let him not so fear His justice as not to be strengthened by the consolation of hope; nor so confident of His mercy as to neglect to apply to his wounds the medicine of adequate penance."[3] "Hope and fear should be unceasingly united in a sinner's heart. For he hopes in vain for mercy if he does not also fear justice. And he fears justice in vain if he does not also rely on mercy."[4] "Art thou righteous? Then fear lest thou fall. Art thou a sinner? Then believe in His mercy, that thou mayest rise."[5]

[1] *Epp.* vii. 22.

[2] *Mor.* ix. 55.

[3] *Mor.* xxxiii. 23; cf. [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* v. 2, 11: "Timor quidem sine spe in desperationem praecipitat, sed cum spei coniungitur salutem mentis operatur."

[4] *Mor.* xxxiii. 24.

[5] *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 15.

The defect of Gregory's teaching about Penance is that he tends to represent it as a system of compensations, by which good works are balanced against sins, and eternal punishment is remitted in consideration of adequate temporal suffering. It should be remarked, however, that in Gregory this view is modified by two considerations, suggested by Augustine. The first is that good works of themselves are insufficient to balance sin, and can avail nothing unless supplemented by God's mercy. "All virtue whatever of human practice is without power to wash away our fault except God's mercy spare and foster it, and His rigid justice pass it by."[1] And in connexion with this the expiatory work of Christ is brought to the front. "Not in our tears," says Gregory, "nor in our actions, but in the pleading of our Advocate, should be our trust."[2] The second consideration is that man is perfectly justified only by love to God.[3] Penance may begin in fear, but it must be perfected in love. And until this love be engendered in the soul, sin cannot wholly be abandoned or erased, nor can man be restored to the life of righteousness.[4] Gregory, perhaps, did not sufficiently perceive that the soul that is filled with the love of God needs no longer to make calculations of sins and their punishments or to draw up an inventory of compensating virtues; in other words, that the affirmation of the principle of love, by establishing man in firm relationship to God, contradicts the judicial scheme of merits and satisfactions. His insistence on the above considerations, however, proves that his doctrine was no mere theory of mechanical equivalence.

(2) *Purgatory.*

The doctrine of Purgatory is closely connected with the doctrine of Penance, being introduced in the interest of those righteous persons whose penances had been insufficient entirely to atone for their sins, but whose virtues merited some reward other than eternal torments. Just as penance itself

[1] *Mor.* viii. 51.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 7, § 24.
[3] *Mor.* xi. 55.
[4] *Ibid.* i. 37; vii. 13; ix. 63, 64; xxi. 5; xxii. 48; xxvii. 33, 34; xxviii. 41; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, § 31; *Reg. Past.* iii. 13; [Greg.] *Super Cantica Canticorum* i. 5, 17.

was a supplement to baptism, and offered a second chance of salvation to the fallen, so the pains of purgatory were now made to supplement earthly penances. An additional hope of making satisfaction was held out to man. Hell was removed one stage further away; and yet one more consolation and encouragement was offered to the penitent.

Gregory has been called the author of the doctrine of Purgatory, and inasmuch as he was the first of the Fathers to lay down this doctrine as one which "ought to be believed," he may deserve the title. Nevertheless, the main idea on which the dogma rests had, in various forms, long been current in the Church. At all events, from the time of Origen to that of Augustine, a belief was general that for all men, after death, there was appointed a fiery trial, through which even the best must pass, that they might be purified from the stains of whatever sins they had committed on earth. But then it was also generally believed that this purgatorial discipline was reserved, not for the intermediate state, but for the final judgment; some of the Fathers, for instance, maintaining that the purifying fire was identical with the fire which should destroy the world. The first traces of the doctrine of Purgatory, in its modern form, are found in Augustine, who alludes to an opinion that the souls of some would suffer the purgatorial fire in the intermediate state. But he gives this view, not as a settled doctrine of the Church, nor even as a doctrine of the truth of which he was personally convinced, but simply as an opinion which might be true, and which, at any rate, he was not inclined to reject.

By the end of the sixth century belief had moved forward, and Gregory no longer had Augustine's doubts. He distinguishes the souls of men into three classes—the perfectly righteous, the imperfectly righteous, and the perfectly wicked. The perfectly righteous (together with whom may be reckoned those whose sins are so light that the mere fear of death is sufficient to purge them away [1]) are at death received immediately into heaven, and enjoy the vision of God even before the judgment.[2]

[1] *Mor.* xxiv. 34; *Dial.* iv. 46.

[2] In the Western Church up to the time of Gregory it was generally believed that the souls of the righteous were not admitted into heaven until after the judgment. Gregory dogmatically affirmed the contrary view. See *Dial.* iv. 25; *Mor.* iv. 56; xiii. 48; xxiv. 34; *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 4.

The perfectly wicked, similarly, are at death cast at once into hell.[1] The imperfectly righteous, however, depart into purgatory. "The souls of some righteous men," says Gregory, "remain in certain mansions, and are not at once admitted into the heavenly kingdom, the reason of the delay being that they lacked somewhat of perfect righteousness."[2] In a celebrated passage he explains himself more fully: "It is to be believed that before the judgment there is a purgatorial fire for certain minor sins. For the Truth says that if any one blasphemes against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this world or in the next. From which we learn that certain sins may be forgiven in this world and certain in the next. For what is denied of one sin is consequently granted touching certain others. Yet, as I said before, we must believe that there can be granted remission only of trifling and very little sins; such as the habit of idle talking, immoderate laughter, faults committed in business such as even good men can scarcely avoid, errors of ignorance in matters of small importance—things which even after death are heavy upon the soul if they have not been forgiven in this life." Gregory then quotes St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 12 *sqq.* and interprets: "Although these words may be understood of the fire of tribulation which men suffer in this life, yet if any one takes them to refer to the fire of purgation in the next, he must carefully consider that the Apostle holds out the possibility of being saved by fire, not to him who builds on the foundation iron, brass, or lead, that is, the greater and harder sins that are no longer remissible in purgatory, but to the builder of wood, hay, and stubble, that is, the least and lightest sins, which the fire easily consumes. We must know, however, that a man will not be cleansed in purgatory of even the least sins, unless during his lifetime he deserved by his good works to receive such favour."[3]

Gregory's doctrine, then, briefly put, comes to this:—The souls of just men who had died without repenting of certain trifling sins, were purified before the judgment by a cleansing fire, which burnt out the last traces of sin. Those only,

[1] *Dial.* iv. 28, 44. Cf. the anecdotes told, *ibid.* iv. 30, 32, 54.
[2] *Ibid.* iv. 25; cf. [Greg.] *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 3. c. 26 *ad fin.*
[3] *Dial.* iv. 39.

however, passed into purgatory whose sins were very light—so light, indeed, that we should hardly reckon them sins at all—and who had merited the grace of purgation by their past good works on earth. All other souls went directly either to heaven or to hell, without entering purgatory. Gregory further teaches that the purgatorial pains may be softened and shortened by the prayers of the faithful on earth,[1] and by the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. "If men's offences are such as can be remitted after death, the sacred oblation of the Saving Victim is wont to be of great benefit to their souls even after death."[2]

It is evident that the doctrine of Purgatory, though accepted in its essential principles, was still far from having acquired the developed form in which it stirred the imagination of the Middle Ages and inspired the verse of Dante. Popular opinion on the subject was still obviously vague and uncertain. Peter, in the *Dialogues*, is made to ask whether there is such a thing as a purgatorial fire after death[3]; and Gregory of Tours seems to hold the old idea that purgatorial punishment for slight offences was reserved for the day of judgment. Gregory the Great himself acknowledges that the doctrine of the state after death had become more definite in his own time, and offers a characteristic explanation of the circumstance. "The future age," he says, "is now so near at hand that it almost touches us, and therefore its nature is more clearly revealed. We stand, as it were, in the twilight of the dawn, and the light is already breaking in."[4] Evidently, both in Gaul and Italy, the state of the departed was still a subject of speculation and surmise. And even Gregory, though he developed the hypothesis of purgatory, and maintained that it "ought to be believed," was far from regarding it as a doctrine of the first moment. Had he done so, it is inconceivable that he should

[1] *Dial.* iv. 40. No prayer is availing for the wicked dead (*ibid.* iv. 44). In *Dial.* iv. 50 *sqq.* is a curious discussion respecting church-burial and how far it may benefit the soul. Gregory says: "Quos gravia peccata non deprimunt, hoc prodest mortuis si in ecclesia sepeliantur, quod eorum proximi quoties ad eadem sacra loca conveniunt, suorum quorum sepulchra conspiciunt recordantur et pro eis Domino preces fundunt. Nam quos peccata gravia deprimunt non ad absolutionem potius quam ad maiorem damnationis cumulum eorum corpora in ecclesiis ponuntur."

[2] *Ibid.* iv. 55; cf. iv. 57.

[3] *Ibid.* iv. 38.

[4] *Ibid.* iv. 41.

have made no allusion to it in his popular discourses, or indeed, in any undoubtedly genuine work except the *Dialogues*. Nevertheless, Gregory laid a foundation for the mediaeval teaching. He is preeminently the creator of the doctrine of Purgatory, which in its later developments must be traced back to him. He supplied the form which, though modified in details, has remained imperishable to the present time.

Section V.—The Doctrine of the Last Things.

As I have already had occasion to point out in the earlier part of my book, Gregory was thoroughly convinced that the end of the world was near at hand.[1] This belief naturally led him to devote more than ordinary attention to the doctrine of the Last Things. Here, as usual, he has followed Augustine wherever possible, working out his views with much circumstantiality, but adding little that is important. He succeeded, however—particularly in his doctrines of Heaven and Hell—in striking out ideas which were preserved through the Middle Ages.

The Resurrection of the Body. It need scarcely be said that Gregory understood the resurrection of the body in the most literal manner. He says, however, that many churchpeople of his time had doubts about the matter, and questioned the possibility of the restoration of the body of man from the dust into which it was resolved. Against such he adduces several arguments. (*a*) The first is based on Authority. He endeavours to prove that the writers both of the Old and of the New Testament taught the material resurrection of the body (adducing, for example, such passages as Job xix. 25 *sqq.*; Ps. civ. 29, 30; Ezek. xxxvii. 4 *sqq.*; Hos. vi. 2; St. John v. 28, 29; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 20 *sqq.*). And he says that if the Old Testament fathers could believe that they would rise again, we, who have received the objective example of the Resurrection of Christ, are worthy of condemnation if we doubt it.[2] (*b*) His second argument is based

[1] *Epp.* iii. 61; iv. 23, 44; v. 44; ix. 156; *Dial.* iii. 38; iv. 41; *Hom. in Ev.* 1, § 1; *Mor.* xv. 3.

[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, § 6.

on the fact of Christ's Resurrection, which involves the resurrection of His members, seeing that the members must share in the glory of the Head. Christ, says Gregory, died that we might not fear to die; He remained three days in the tomb that we might not despair if our resurrection be delayed; He rose again to give us assurance that we should rise. And, lest any should still doubt and imagine that Christ overcame death because He was God, thus giving no hope of victory to mere men, we are told in the Gospel that the bodies of many saints arose. Thus not only did Christ Himself give us an example of what we are to expect, but He also confirmed it by the resurrection of others who were mere human beings like ourselves.[1] (*c*) The third argument is from the fact of creation. It is easier for God to restore what was than to create what was not. Therefore if, as is confessed, God could create the universe, including man, out of nothing, He could have no difficulty in recreating man from his dust, and building up once more his fleshly body.[2] (*d*) The fourth argument is founded on natural analogies. Nature presents us with types of the resurrection. Light dies every evening, and is restored at daybreak; the seasons perish and return; trees and shrubs lose their verdure and renew it. Men would cease to make a difficulty of the resurrection if they would but take the trouble to contemplate "the daily miracles of Nature."[3] (*e*) The fifth argument is a reply to a special objection. "The flesh of man is eaten by a wolf, the wolf is devoured by a lion, the lion dies and is turned into dust. How then, at the resurrection, shall the flesh of man be restored, and distinguished from the flesh of the wolf and of the lion?" Gregory replies by referring to the mysteries of conception and birth, and the development of the complex human organism from embryonic matter. "See, O man, how thou hast entered into life, and doubt no longer how thou shalt return to life."[4] (*f*) The last argument is an appeal to the inscrutable power of God. God does many things which we cannot understand, but which we do not therefore disbelieve. For instance, He brings us into life and

[1] *Mor.* xiv. 68, 69; *Hom. in Ev.* 21, §§ 2, 6.
[2] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 12; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, § 7.
[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 12; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, § 7; *Mor.* vi. 19; xiv. 70.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, § 8.

maintains us in it, without our knowing how. Why, then, should we fix on this one mystery of our return to life, and refuse to credit it? God works marvels, which are marvellous just because they are incomprehensible, and it is man's duty to venerate such in faith, and not to impertinently scrutinize them with the intellect.[1]

In respect of the nature of the resurrection-body, Gregory raises the question: "Will it be a subtle or ethereal body, or will it be true flesh, the selfsame body that died?" He rejects the former supposition, on the ground that there would not be a "resurrection" unless the very thing which fell was raised again, nor would there be a "true resurrection" unless that which was raised was true flesh.[2] Nevertheless, though the resurrection-body will be a real body, identically the same as the body that died, it will be at the same time glorified and spiritualized, being "subtle by the efficacy of spiritual power, but palpable by the reality of its nature." "We confess," Gregory writes, "that our flesh after the resurrection will be both the same and different—the same in respect of nature, different in respect of glory; the same in its reality, different in its power. Thus it will be subtle in that it will be incorruptible: it will be palpable in that it will not lose the essence of its true nature."[3]

The resurrection will not take place until the end of the world. Then God will "call" and man will rise from his corruption incorruptible.[4] The good and the evil alike will receive back their flesh, now made imperishable whether for blessedness or for suffering.[5] Then will come the Judgment.

The Judgment. Christ will appear in the form of His humanity (as Scripture says: *They shall look on Him whom they pierced*),[6] accompanied by all the angels and the heavenly powers.[7] The human race will be separated into four classes[8]:—(i.) The good who are not judged—those perfect men who in their lifetime surpassed by their virtues even the precepts of the law. These

[1] *Mor.* vi. 18, 19; *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 8, §§ 8–10; *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 12.
[2] *Mor.* xiv. 71.
[3] *Ibid.* xiv. 77. For Gregory's controversy with Eutychius on this question, see above, Vol. I. pp. 142, 143.
[4] *Ibid.* xii. 18.
[5] *Dial.* iv. 3.
[6] *Hom. in Ev.* 13, § 4.
[7] *Hom. in Ev.* 12, § 4.
[8] *Mor.* xxvi. 50, 51.

sit in judgment with Christ. (ii.) The good who are judged, but on account of their penances and good works are acquitted. (iii.) The wicked, who, though possessing the Faith, are condemned for their evil lives by the words of the Judge. (iv.) The unbelievers, who are condemned without judicial sentence. The two middle classes alone will be brought up for judgment, in the sight of the whole human race and of angels and archangels.[1] The opening of the books and of the book of Life is interpreted to mean the disclosure of the holy lives of the saints, and the vision of the law of God as embodied in the Judge, and the dead are judged according as they have imitated the one and kept the precepts of the other.[2] No accuser is needed, for every sinner is convicted by his own conscience, which calls up before the mind every sin that has been committed.[3] Gregory adds that the future judgment is only the conclusion of a process which is already begun. For already God judges men; by present evils He gives the reprobate a foretaste of the torments to come, and increases their guilt because they do not amend under His scourge; by temporal punishment also He corrects the elect and releases them from future penalties.[4] This secret judgment, already taking effect within the soul, will be manifested on the Last Day, when those who have been before cast out by the hidden counsel of God shall be publicly rejected.[5]

The State of Blessedness. Gregory maintained, contrary to the opinion of Augustine, that immediately after death the spirits of the perfectly righteous are admitted into heaven and enjoy the vision of God.[6] After the judgment, however, besides the beatitude of the soul, they experience the additional beatitude of the body, and "rejoice in that very flesh in which they have borne pain and suffering for Christ's sake."[7] Yet the chief stress is laid on the Vision of God. The elect behold God in the brightness of His Divine Nature, and by gazing on Him they are made like unto Him, and become unchangeable,[8]

[1] *Mor.* viii. 41.
[2] *Ibid.* xxiv. 16.
[3] *Ibid.* xxv. 13.
[4] *Ibid.* ix. 68.
[5] *Ibid.* xxv. 19.
[6] *Ibid.* iv. 56; xiii. 48; xxiv. 34; *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 4; *Dial.* iv. 25. A different opinion is expressed by the author of *Exp. in Prim. Reg.* ii. 1, c. 6.
[7] *Dial.* iv. 25.
[8] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 2, § 20; *Mor.* xii. 38.

and immortal,[1] and wise, and holy.[2] God is at once the object of all desire, and the satisfaction of it; since the saints desire to see Him and at the same time are satisfied with seeing Him, desiring without pain, and being satisfied without satiety.[3] The state of blessedness, moreover, is a state of perfect liberty (of which the liberty that we now enjoy in contemplation is but a poor imitation),[4] which comes from perfect security in respect of sin.[5] For though the righteous recollect their past sins in heaven, yet the remembrance neither pollutes nor pains them, because they have forgiveness of the past and are without apprehension for the future, since they can sin no more.[6] Again, in the state of blessedness the saints enjoy unlimited knowledge. For they know all things in knowing God.[7] Thus the soul as well as the body of each saint is laid completely open to the inspection of all, and in heaven one knows another as on earth a man is not known even to himself.[8] Further, they see and recognize not only all the good men whom they had known when on earth, but all those whom they had never seen.[9] They see also the damned in torment, but the vision does not trouble them, since they recognize the fitness of God's judgment, and experience a heightened sense of their own blessings by force of contrast.[10] Gregory adds that though all alike enjoy this blessedness of heavenly joy, yet the saints have various degrees of dignity, determined by their merits, and corresponding to the grades of the angelic hierarchy. In the Father's house are many mansions. But though some of the blessed excel others in dignity, there is no envy among them, for all are so closely united by love that each participates in the blessings of the rest, and receives joyfully in another what has not been granted to himself.[11]

The State of Damnation. Passing to the state of Damnation, Gregory teaches that Hell is a subterranean region, as far below

[1] *Mor.* xviii. 79; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 15.
[2] *Mor.* xviii. 81.
[3] *Ibid.* xviii. 91; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, § 15.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 3, § 13.
[5] *Mor.* viii. 13.
[6] *Ibid.* iv. 72.
[7] *Hom. in Ev.* 40, § 8; *Mor.* xii. 26; *Dial.* iv. 33.
[8] *Mor.* xviii. 78.
[9] *Dial.* iv. 33.
[10] *Hom. in Ev.* 40, §§ 7, 8; *Dial.* iv. 44; *Mor.* xxxiii. 29.
[11] *Mor.* iv. 70; xxxv. 46; *Hom. in Ev.* 34, § 11.

the earth as the earth itself is below the sky.[1] Volcanoes are openings into it; and Gregory says, referring to a popular belief that the mouths of volcanoes were constantly widening, that it is on account of the increasing number of the damned who pass through them, now that the world is drawing to its end.[2]

In Hell itself there is distinguished a higher and a lower region.[3] The former is a place of weariness, but not of torment. Here on account of original sin the souls of all the ancient saints were detained, until Christ descended and set them free.[4] The lower hell is the prison of the damned—a bottomless abyss[5] of corporeal fire,[6] created from the beginning of the world for the punishment of the wicked.[7]

The torments of the wicked are enumerated by Gregory as follows. First there is the torment of pain. The fire of hell is a corporeal fire, but it can torture not only the bodies but also the spirits of the damned. Before the judgment it tortures their spirits only: after the judgment it burns also their bodies. Gregory regards this doctrine of fiery torture as an article of faith. "It is necessary to believe," he says—*credi necesse est* —"that from the day of their departure the reprobate are burned with fire." The fire is inextinguishable, tormenting its victims without and within eternally, but without destroying them.[8] Secondly, there is the torment of separation from God. The damned hunger for the Bread of Life, which is taken from them, and are consumed with longing for a Redeemer whom they can never see. Their souls are plunged into everlasting darkness of severance from God.[9] Thirdly, there is the torment of fear. In this life, says Gregory, we fear pain or we suffer pain, but we do not do both at the same time. In hell, however, the damned at once suffer what they dread and unceasingly dread what they suffer. Pain gives no relief from terror.[10] Fourthly, there is the torment of despair, for they who are once consigned

[1] *Mor.* xiii. 53; *Dial.* iv. 42.
[2] *Dial.* iv. 35; cf. *ibid.* iv. 30.
[3] *Mor.* xii. 13; xiii. 53.
[4] *Ibid.* iv. 56; xii. 13; xiii. 49, 53; xx. 66; xxix. 23; *Hom. in Ev.* 19, § 4; 22, § 6.
[5] *Mor.* xxvi. 68.
[6] *Ibid.* xv. 35.
[7] *Ibid.* xv. 35.
[8] *Dial.* iv. 28, 29; *Mor.* xv. 35, 36.
[9] *Mor.* vi. 47; ix. 97.
[10] *Ibid.* ix. 100.

to the punishment of hell can never be restored to pardon.[1] Fifthly, there is the torment of witnessing the torture of others. For the damned suffer a double pang when they see those whom they loved on earth in torment like themselves.[2] Sixthly, before the judgment the damned are tormented by witnessing the blessedness of the good in heaven. Gregory intimates, however, that after the judgment the wicked will no longer see the good, though the good will ever see the wicked.[3]

The punishments of Hell are eternal.[4] Gregory quotes St. Matt. xxv. 46, and argues: "If the punishments of the reprobate will at any time be ended, the joys of the blessed will also be ended at last." If the words of Christ are to be taken as literally true in regard to the righteous, they must also hold good in respect of the wicked. He defends the justice of God in punishing with eternal torment sin which was not eternal, on the ground that punishment is inflicted, not on mere acts of sin, which of necessity have a limit, but on the sinful will, which is unlimited in its inclination towards sin. He also urges that eternal punishment is the necessary outcome of God's justice, and serves a good purpose in that the righteous, beholding the torments of the damned, are the more closely united in thankfulness to the God who redeemed them.[5] Therefore the reprobate will be tortured for ever, suffering more than they can bear, but never coming to an end, dying without death, failing without being finished.[6] For those in such a case neither prayers nor masses are availing.[7]

Moreover, though the misery of all the damned is infinite, yet the degrees of punishment are proportioned to the degrees of guilt, and those who have exceeded in sin suffer the worse in consequence. "For as in the house of our Father there are many mansions according to the diversities in virtue, so the damned suffer diverse punishment in the fires of hell in accordance with the measure of their guilt. For though hell be one and the same for all, it by no means burns all in one and the

[1] *Mor.* viii. 29, 34.
[2] *Ibid.* ix. 101; *Dial.* iv. 33; *Hom. in Ev.* 40, § 8.
[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 40, §§ 2, 7, 8.
[4] *Dial.* iv. 44; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 6, § 18.
[5] *Mor.* xxxiv. 34, *sqq.*; *Dial.* iv. 44.
[6] *Mor.* xv. 21; ix. 100; *Dial.* iv. 45.
[7] *Mor.* xxxiv. 38; *Dial.* iv. 44.

same way." Those guilty of like sins (*e.g.* pride, lust, avarice, and the rest) are subjected to like retribution.[1]

Gregory did much to foster the literature of Heaven and Hell. The stories which he relates in the *Dialogues*—the vision of Stephen is the most remarkable[2]—undoubtedly produced a great impression on the popular mind. And though his pictures of the unseen world are somewhat colourless and unimaginative, they had the effect of stimulating other writers for the production of this kind of literature. On the other hand, his dogmatic teaching about the future state determined the doctrine of the mediaeval theologians. The Schoolmen adopted his opinions, adding indeed many refinements of their own, but always remaining in substantial agreement with his conclusions. And from the Schoolmen, particularly from Aquinas, many of Dante's immortal descriptions are derived. Thus a real connexion may be traced between the doctor of the sixth century and the poet of the thirteenth. The literature which culminated in the *Divina Commedia* received inspiration and impulse from Gregory the Great.

Section VI.—The Doctrine of Faith, Love, and Good Works.

Gregory, like Augustine, refuses to separate Christian morality from Christian faith. With him the ethical element stands always in intimate connexion with the doctrinal; for the goodness of a man's outward actions is determined by his inner nature, and the goodness of his inner nature depends on the relation in which he stands to God. Hence he says that the good man must be both *simplex* and *rectus*—sincere in the good he does, and right in the truth he holds. There is no true morality save that of the Christian believer.[3]

The beginning of virtue, then, is Faith. "In the hearts of the elect," says Gregory, "wisdom is first engendered, before all the graces that follow; and she comes forth as it were a first-born offspring by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now, this wisdom is our faith. For then we are truly wise to understand, when we yield the assent of our belief to all that our Creator says. But if faith be not first produced in our hearts,

[1] *Mor.* ix. 98; xv. 22; *Dial.* iv. 35, 43.
[2] *Dial.* iv. 36.
[3] *Mor.* i. 36.

all that follows cannot be good, although it may seem to be good."[1] Faith seems here to be regarded in the sense of orthodox belief. But, as Gregory constantly teaches, perfect faith is more than this. Hence he draws a distinction between "fides" and "vita fidei." Mere faith, he says, does not bring men to salvation; for there are many who possess faith without its works, and in their self-contradiction perish.[2] To avail at all, faith must be joined with works[3]; "he truly believes who practises in his works what he believes."[4] Nevertheless, though works must be added to faith, it is faith which makes good works possible. "For works are built on faith as a building on a foundation."[5] Faith is the vestibule of the virtues,[6] the gate through which we approach the vision of God.[7] The case of Cornelius is an instance of this. For Cornelius possessed faith, since his prayers and alms were acceptable to God, and it is written: *without faith it is impossible to please God.* So by faith he was enabled to do good works, which in turn God rewarded by establishing him in faith and making him to know God more perfectly. "By faith, then, he came to works, but by works he was built up in faith."[8] Hence, according to Gregory, faith, in the sense of belief in God's Revelation, is the first step in the good life.

Faith, however, must be supplemented by Love—the Divine principle of life, which springs from faith and is the source of all the virtues. "As many branches of a tree spring from a single root, so many virtues spring from love, which is one. The branch of good works is without verdure, except it abide in the root of love. Hence the precepts of our Lord are many and yet one—many in respect of the manifoldness of works, one in the root which is love."[9]

From this principle of Love as the root of the virtues, Gregory drew two deductions. The first is that there is a necessary inward connexion between all the virtues, in consequence of which no single one can subsist in absolute isolation from the rest. "For all the virtues lift themselves up in the sight of the

[1] *Mor.* ii. 71.
[2] *Ibid.* xxv. 27; xxxiii. 12.
[3] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 9, § 6; *Epp.* vii. 15.
[4] *Hom. in Ev.* 26, § 9.
[5] *Mor.* xxv. 27; cf. xxviii. 20; *Epp.* iv. 33.
[6] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 7, § 9.
[7] *Ibid.* ii. 5, § 8.
[8] *Ibid.* ii. 7, § 9.
[9] *Hom. in Ev.* 27, § 1.

Creator by mutually assisting one another, that, because one virtue without another is either nothing at all, or at any rate of the very smallest account, they may mutually support one another by close alliance." Thus to the Author of chastity and humility, neither chastity without humility, nor humility without chastity, is of any worth.[1] And so it is with all the rest. Gregory illustrates this view at some length. He first takes the four cardinal virtues—prudence, fortitude, justice, and temperance—and shows that they are all so intimately connected with one another that the measure of one is the measure of all, and the increase or decrease of one implies a corresponding increase or decrease of all.[2] He then proves the same of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost—wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, godliness, and the fear of God[3]—and of the three theological virtues—faith, hope, and charity.[4] And lastly, he shows that each of these classes of virtues is similarly connected with the rest. For the gifts of the Holy Ghost can only be received by a mind which possesses the four cardinal virtues[5]; and the cardinal virtues, in their turn, cannot operate effectively unless they be joined with the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.[6] Hence Gregory concludes: "Each separate virtue is not truly a virtue, if the other virtues also be not added."[7]

Gregory's second deduction from the principle of Love is that mere outward acts of piety, *opera operata*, are void and valueless. Only those works are good which spring from the good will, from love. Thus Gregory remarks that it often happens that men adopt the religious dress without adopting the religious life. They are still passionate, spiteful, covetous, and all the time they are priding themselves on some good deeds which they display before men's eyes. Such persons might be addressed in the language which St. Paul applied to those who believed in the externals of the Law: *in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.* "To despise the present world," says Gregory,

[1] *Mor.* xxi. 6; xxii. 2; [Greg.] *Exp. in Sept. Psalm. Poenit.* iii. 3.
[2] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 10, § 18. On the four cardinal virtues, see also *Mor.* ii. 76, 77.
[3] *Mor.* i. 45.
[4] *Hom. in Ezech.* ii. 10, § 17.
[5] *Mor.* ii. 77.
[6] *Ibid.* i. 46.
[7] *Ibid.* i. 54.

"to cease to love the transient, to be thoroughly humble before God and towards our neighbour, to bear insults with patience, and with patience to banish from the heart every feeling of revenge, to give our property to the needy, never to hanker after the goods of others, to love our friends in God and for God's sake to love even our enemies, to be grieved when our neighbours suffer, and not to rejoice over the death of an enemy,—this is the new creation."[1] Under the influence of this idea, Gregory, rigid ascetic though he was,[2] speaks slightingly of those ascetic practices which do not spring from true love and self-renunciation—of fasting with a view to reputation[3]; of almsgiving, unaccompanied by withdrawal from sin[4]; of humility which is but a cloak of pride[5]; of confession which is not the fruit of sincere contrition[6]; of chastity which puffs up[7]; of patience without love[8]; of renunciation which is not complete.[9] He says that the important point to consider is, not the good work that is done, but the intention with which it is done. Love, the good will, self-abnegation, is the main thing.[10] Virtues which do not grow out of love are soon plucked up by the devil.[11] And therefore it is necessary to scrutinize with the utmost care all our virtues and good works, lest they be polluted by a bad intention,[12] and to offer for each the sacrifice of prayer that it may be free from sinful alloy.[13]

Finally, Love which springs from Faith produces Good Works. For love can never be inoperative. "The law of God is rightly called manifold," says Gregory, "because when love, which is one, has taken full possession of the mind, it kindles the same in manifold ways to innumerable works."[14] These good works are distinguished by Gregory into three classes. Some are such as are commanded by God, and which, therefore, cannot be left undone without sin. Others are such as the elect practise in

[1] *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 10, §§ 8, 9.

[2] Gregory took for his motto the words: "Perfecta vita est mortis imitatio" (*Mor.* xiii. 33).

[3] *Hom. in Ev.* 32, § 3. [4] *Mor.* xix. 38; xxxiv. 29. [5] *Ibid.* xxvii. 78.

[6] *Mor.* xxiv. 22. [7] *Ibid.* xxii. 2; xxxiv. 29.

[8] *Ibid.* xxxiv. 29. [9] *Hom. in Ev.* 32, § 2.

[10] *Hom. in Ev.* 5, § 3; *Mor.* i. 53.

[11] *Mor.* xxviii. 46; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 8, §§ 7, 8.

[12] *Mor.* i. 47, 49; xxii. 14; xxviii. 30, 31; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 4, § 4.

[13] *Mor.* i. 48.

[14] *Ibid.* x. 9.

order to wipe out past transgressions. Others, again, are works of perfection, which the elect voluntarily perform in order to increase their merits.[1] "The elect, who are trained in good works, sometimes endeavour to do more than God has seen fit to command that they should do. For instance, virginity, though commended, is not commanded; for, if it were commanded, wedlock must be considered a sin. And yet there are many who are strong in the virtue of virginity, so that they render in service more than was commanded."[2] These "surpass even the precepts of the Law in the perfection of their virtues. They are not satisfied with performing that alone which the Divine Law enjoins on all, but with more excellent desire seek to do more than what is commanded in general precepts." Their reward is that they will not be judged at the general judgment, but will come as judges with Christ.[3]

Faith, Love, Good Works—these are the steps by which, according to Gregory, man attains to righteousness. And this righteousness, if persevered in, brings salvation. Without perseverance, however, nothing avails. "Vain is the good we do," says Gregory, "if it be given over before the end of life; vain is it to run fast if we faint before the goal is reached."[4] Yet even those who fall before the end, though they gain nothing themselves, serve the interests of the elect. For the latter take warning from their example and become the more zealous to persist in good living,[5] knowing that the beginning of the future life depends on the end of the present,[6] and that the virtue and merit of all good works depend on perseverance.[7]

[1] *Epp.* xi. 27.
[2] *Mor.* xv. 22.
[3] *Mor.* xxvi. 51.
[4] *Mor.* i. 55; *Hom. in Ev.* 25, § 1.
[5] *Mor.* xxxiv. 30.
[6] *Ibid.* xxix. 20.

[7] It will be sufficient to have indicated in the outline given above, the intimate connexion which Gregory established between morals and religion—a connexion which for many centuries no one, save a few Pelagianizing doctors, made any serious attempt to dissolve. It is unnecessary, however, to go more particularly into the details of his moral system. Many of his observations, indeed, are worthy of consideration. I might refer, for instance, to his analyses of the virtues of fortitude (*Mor.* v. 33; vii. 24), humility (*ibid.* xxvii. 75–79; cf. xvi. 39, 40), truthfulness (*ibid.* xviii. 5), and obedience (*ibid.* xxxv. 28–33); or to his discussions on the uses of adversity (*Mor.* Praef. 12; *Mor.* xiv. 40; xx. 61; xxiv. 45; xxxi. 107); or to his remarks on the relation of the active to the contemplative life (*Mor.* vi. 56–62; *Hom. in Ezech.* i. 3, § 9; i. 5, § 12; ii. 2, § 8; ii. 6, § 5); or to his definition of the kinds of temptation (*Mor.* xii. 22); or to his doctrine of the ascetic mean (*ibid.* xx. 78; xxx. 62, 63); or

Such, in brief, is the teaching of the Fourth Doctor of the Latin Church. Its importance, as I have already indicated, lies mainly in its popular summarization of the doctrine of Augustine, and in its detailed exposition of various religious conceptions which were current in the Western Church, but had not hitherto been defined with precision. On the one hand, Gregory provided what may be termed a popular version of Augustine. That is to say, he restated his views in simple, unphilosophic form, and at the same time toned some of them down in the interests of practical piety. Thus, for example, the doctrine of God is reproduced in simple language, and the doctrine of Grace is modified in the practical interest by the vigorous assertion of the freedom of the will. So popularized Augustinianism was erected into a standard by Gregory, and thus passed over to the Middle Ages. On the other hand, Gregory was the first to give clear expression to many current religious conceptions which had hitherto been but imperfectly defined, as, for instance, the conception of Purgatory or of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. In his exposition of such ideas he made a distinct advance upon the older theology, and influenced profoundly the dogmatic development of the future.

The combination of Augustinianism with the conceptions of the popular religion, thus effected by Gregory, is the ground of the systems of mediaeval Catholicism. The Schoolmen worked on Gregory's material. They analyzed his theology, restated his propositions in scientific form, and endeavoured to reconcile them to the understanding by elaborate dialectical proofs. Doctrine, as was natural, developed in the process, and the schemes of Scholasticism present many points of contrast with

to his analysis of the causes of sin (*Mor.* xxv. 28); or to his account of the conception, birth, and growth of good in man (*ibid.* xxx. 40, 41); or to his teaching on habit, will, knowledge, and other subjects, which have been already touched upon in the foregoing sections. These subjects are handled by Gregory with an easy mastery, which proves him to have been a moral theologian of high rank. No early Father better understood the human soul or analyzed more clearly its miseries and necessities, or indicated more pointedly the remedies that should be applied. These matters, however, belong to a province on which it is not here proposed to trench. The interest of Gregory's work for modern students lies less in his ethic than in his remarkable dogmatic anticipations of mediaeval teaching.

the teaching of the *Morals* and the *Homilies*. Yet it should be borne in mind that it is on Gregory's work that these later systems in the main are based. It is the ideas and doctrines emphasized by him that afterwards became of first-rate importance in the Church.

It may be worth while, in conclusion, to remark on the analogy that may be drawn between Gregory's work as a Ruler, and his work as a Doctor of the Church. His pontificate is important in the history of the Papacy, not because he introduced fresh ideas of the Papal authority, but because he gave energetic practical expression to the ideas already existing, because he laboured for the consolidation of the power that was conceded, because he imparted a real impulse to a rapidly developing system, and because he had no successor of note until the time of Gregory the Seventh. And so it was with his teaching. Gregory's theology is important in the history of dogma: yet we do not find in it new ideas or the settlement of difficult questions. Gregory does not give us much new matter or new light. But he does sum up the teaching of the older Fathers and bring it into union with the opinion of his time. He does consolidate and strengthen the Catholicism he found, preparing the matter for future elaboration. He does impart a life and impulse to prevailing tendencies, helping on the construction of the system hereafter to be completed in Scholasticism. He gives to theology a tone and an emphasis which cannot be disregarded. And from his time to that of Anselm no teacher of equal eminence arose in the Church. For a period of nearly four centuries the last word on theology rested with Gregory the Great.

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III.—A TABLE OF DATES

A.D.

540. ? Birth of Gregory.
545. Totila lays siege to Rome.
546. Rome taken by the Goths.
547. Rome recovered by Belisarius.
548. Belisarius leaves Italy.
549. Rome again taken by the Goths.
552. Defeat and death of Totila.
553. Defeat and death of Teias.
The Fifth General Council at Constantinople.
554. Defeat of Franks and Alamanni by Narses at Capua.
Promulgation of the Pragmatic Sanction.
555. Death of Pope Vigilius in Sicily: accession of Pelagius I.
560. Death of Pelagius I: election of John III.
565. Death of Belisarius.
Death of Justinian: accession of Justin II.
567. Disgrace of Narses. Longinus succeeds him at Ravenna.
Death of Charibert, king of Paris: Gaul divided into three kingdoms.
568. Lombards invade Italy under Alboin.
569. Alboin overruns Liguria and lays siege to Pavia.
571. Foundation of duchies of Spoleto and Benevento.
572. Fall of Pavia.
Murder of Alboin.
Cleph elected king of the Lombards.
573. ? Gregory Prefect of the City of Rome.
Death of Pope John III.
574. ? Gregory becomes a monk.
Benedict I elected Pope.
Cleph assassinated, and the ten years' interregnum begins.
575. Murder of Sigibert at Vitry.
577. Embassy of Pamphronius to Constantinople.
578. ? Gregory ordained "Seventh Deacon."
Death of Pope Benedict I: election of Pelagius II.
Death of the Emperor Justin II: succession of Tiberius.
579. ? Gregory sent as apocrisiarius to Constantinople.
582. John the Faster succeeds Eutychius as Patriarch of Constantinople.
The Emperor Tiberius dies and Maurice begins to reign.
584. Authari chosen king of the Lombards.
Birth of Theodosius, son of Maurice.
Childebert king of Austrasia invades Italy.
585. Smaragdus succeeds Longinus as Exarch.
Death of Hermenigild.
586. ? Gregory recalled to Rome.
Gregory becomes abbat of St. Andrew's Monastery.
589. Council of Toledo.
The Exarch Smaragdus superseded by Romanus.
King Authari marries Theudelinda.
Floods in Italy.

A.D.

590. The Plague in Italy.
Invasion of Franks under Olo, Audovald, and Chedin.
Death of King Authari: Theudelinda marries Agilulf.
Death of Pope Pelagius II.
Gregory elected Pope.
Gregory ordains a Sevenfold Litany.
Gregory consecrated Pope, September 3.
Gregory publishes his *Pastoral Care*.

591. Agilulf proclaimed king of the Lombards.
Ariulf and Arichis become dukes respectively of Spoleto and Benevento.
Drought and famine in Italy.
Maximianus made bishop of Syracuse.
Gregory attacks the African system of Primacies.
? Gregory reclaims and dedicates an Arian church in Rome.

592. Gregory appoints a governor in Nepi, and provides for the defence of Naples.
Gregory makes peace with Duke Ariulf.
The Exarch Romanus comes to Rome.

593. Agilulf besieges Rome.
Constantius consecrated Archbishop of Milan.
Salona trouble begins.
Beginning of the pallium controversy between Gregory and the bishops of Ravenna.
Death of Guntram king of Burgundy.
Synod in Numidia against the Donatists.
Gregory protests against the law of Maurice forbidding soldiers to become monks.
? Gregory publishes the *Dialogues*.

594. Council at Carthage against the Donatists.
Gregory refuses the Empress's request for the head of St. Paul.
Death of Maximianus of Syracuse.

595. Gregory sends to Maurice the famous "Fool" Letter.
Gregory confers pallium and vicariate on Virgilius of Arles.
John of Ravenna dies, and is succeeded by Marinianus.
Roman synod passes six decrees.
John and Athanasius tried and acquitted by Gregory.
Gregory writes his letters on the "Ecumenical" controversy.
John the Faster dies, and is succeeded by Cyriacus.

596. The affair of the placard at Ravenna.
Death of King Childebert.
? Death of the Exarch Romanus.
Augustine starts for Britain.

597. ? Callinicus the Exarch arrives at Ravenna.
Brunichildis requests the pallium for Syagrius.
Augustine lands in Britain and converts King Ethelbert.
Augustine is consecrated "Archbishop of the English."
Death of Columba.

599. Gregory sends the pallium to Leander of Seville.
Gregory endeavours to promote a synod in Gaul for reformation of abuses.
Peace concluded between the Empire and the Lombards.
Maximus of Salona submits to the Pope.

600. Constantius of Milan dies; and is succeeded by Deusdedit.

601. Renewal of Lombard war: seizure of Agilulf's daughter by the Exarch Callinicus.
Gregory again attempts to get a council held in Gaul.
Second mission to Britain starts.

602. The Exarch Callinicus superseded by Smaragdus.
Birth of Adalwald, son of Agilulf and Theudelinda.
The fall of the Emperor Maurice and the coronation of Phocas.

A.D.

Privilegia sent by Gregory to Brunichildis.
Firminus of Trieste secedes from the Istrian schism.
? Augustine's first conference with the British bishops.
603. The Phocas Letters.
Campaign of Agilulf: peace concluded.
The mission of John the defensor to Spain.
Synod at Chalon-sur-Saône.
Augustine's second conference with the British bishops.
604. Foundation of the sees of Rochester and London.
Death of Pope Gregory, March 12.

THE END

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